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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

JANUARY 1914

The Theosophical Society, as such, is not responsible for any opinion or declaration in this magazine, by whomsoever expressed, unless contained in an official document.

"Theosophy and the Coming Christ."

WE have received, from a valued friend, a booklet noteworthy, in part, because it brings into the clear light of day certain views and theories much canvassed of late, but nowhere so frankly and sincerely stated; noteworthy also for its misunderstandings, for it is in essence an attempt to show that "the teachings of Theosophy and the facts upon which the Christian Faith is based are incompatible, and to accept both is a logical impossibility."

This conclusion is so completely opposed to what we hold to be true, that it is important to follow the process of thought which has led to it. It may be that, in doing this, we may, at the same time, be able to make clearer what we hold Theosophy to be, what we understand Christianity to be, and what appears to us to be the true relation between them.

In the sentence just quoted, we find our first important clue. It is evident that, in the view of the writer of this pamphlet, Theosophy means what is promulgated by certain individuals. But we believe that Theosophy is really something widely different; something which is not, and cannot be, *promulgated* by anyone; something which must be *lived*, not promulgated; something which can only be revealed by living it; which can only be understood by living it. Theosophy is not a system of doctrines; it is the living Spirit of the Divine.

So we are convinced that no one has, or can have, under any circumstances whatever, either the right or the power to promulgate an authoritative statement of Theosophy; not even Mme. H. P. Blavatsky herself,

highly as we honour her; not even a Master of Wisdom, deeply as we reverence the Masters.

For the real Theosophy, the Theosophy of the Masters, the Theosophy for which Mme. H. P. Blavatsky lived and suffered and died, is a *divine* revelation, a divine power revealing itself in life. Only as it is revealed in life, can we say that it is Theosophy. "By their *fruits* ye shall know them." Theosophy is to be known by its fruits, and whatever does not bring forth the fruits of Theosophy, is not Theosophy.

"By their *fruits* ye shall know them." This is the vital principle which the Christian Master laid down, for the testing of his own teaching. The wisest among his followers have always adhered to it. Thus Paul writes to the Romans: "Ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end, everlasting life." To the Galatians he writes: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." And James, the Lord's brother, affirms the same law: "The wisdom (*Sophia*) that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace, of them that make peace."

"The wisdom from above" is the true Theosophy. Born in the heart by divine inspiration it begins forthwith to transmute the whole being to its own divine nature, changing the mortal to the immortal, making over the animal into the angel; the end, as Paul says, everlasting life. That is the test of Theosophy. Wherever life is thus made divine, changed from the earthly to the likeness of the heavenly, there is true Theosophy, the spirit of divine life itself, working in the heart.

That is its only authentic revelation. That which bears the fruits of Theosophy is Theosophy. That which does not bear the fruits of Theosophy is not Theosophy. Let us try to apply this test to any system promulgated by individuals. What are its fruits? A new dogmatism, more rigid and complicated than the old, a dogmatism resting on "authority?" Such a close-knit and complex dogmatism is not that serene and universal Spirit of Life, the true Theosophy, which makes over the earthly in the likeness of the heavenly, through the divine indwelling light, the celestial fire of spiritual life; such a dogmatic system is not the divine power which transmutes the mortal into the immortal. One might, indeed, affirm every article of this new dogmatism, and yet bear none of the fruits of the Spirit, the fruits of true Theosophy.

We therefore hold that the writer of this pamphlet was completely misled, in going to India to "promulgate Theosophy." The inevitable disillusionment, therefore, while it was painful, was also salutary. But,

for this suffering, keen and real as it evidently was, these misconceptions, and not Theosophy, must bear the blame.

One more sentence from the introductory Note. The writer declares that, "if the facts relating to the preaching of Theosophy in India could be fully made known in England, we do not think that many would continue to call themselves Theosophists. At any rate, the expression 'Christian Theosophist' would cease to exist." We share the belief that real good will come of a thorough knowledge of the facts. But we do not think that this necessarily leads us to the above conclusion; but rather that a deeper understanding may lead many men and women of pure heart to realize that, in purpose and aspiration, they are Theosophists; and we believe this to be true of the most devoted followers of Christ.

Does sincere advocacy of Christianity necessarily imply a real understanding of Christianity? The question is suggested by the following passage of the pamphlet: "Is that Christianity at all which denies the exclusive claims of Christ, and accepts as equally unsatisfactory all the great religions of the world? Where would Christianity have been now, if a place had been accepted for Christ in the Greek Pantheon? Where would Christianity be now in India or Japan, if Christ were admitted to be only an alternative to Krishna or the Amida?"

Here we touch on a vital principle: "Is that Christianity at all which denies the exclusive claims of Christ?" This may mean either exclusive claims made *by* Christ or exclusive claims made *for* Christ. We shall try to consider both; for we believe that the supposed "exclusive" character of Christianity has been a thorn in the side of Christian life for ages; and we believe also that the time is coming when this thorn must be extracted, and the wound healed.

To go to the heart of the matter: Did Jesus make any "exclusive claims" for himself? To begin with, did he "exclude" anything that was excellent in Judaism? Did he not, rather, conspicuously include all that was best in the religion of those about him? Take a characteristic example: the story of the young man of great possessions, who came to Jesus, saying: "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?"

The Master answered:

"Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

"He said unto him, which?

"Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

"The young man said unto him, all these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me." (Matthew xix, 16-22.)

Did Jesus impose on him, or propose to him, any new *dogma?* Did he make any "exclusive" claim? Did he bid him give up the teaching into which he was born? Did he not, on the contrary, refer him back to the Commandments, the central essence of the Jewish faith?

Jesus said, it is true, "Come and follow me." What did he mean by "follow me?" Are we not led to his fuller meaning in the wonderful variant of the story: "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, *take up the cross,* and follow me." (Mark x, 21.)

Did the Master mean, to follow him, by a dogmatic acceptance? Or did he mean to follow him in a method and a life? Did he say "believe in the cross" or "take up the cross?" Is it not a question of leading the life which the Master led, a life of perfect obedience to the Father? "If ye *keep my commandments,* ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."

Let us try to apply the principle which underlies this wonderful story. It was entirely possible for the young man, who was a good Jew, to remain a good Jew, and at the same time to "follow Jesus" in this sense. The elder disciples remained pious Jews to the day of their death, "continuing daily with one accord in the temple." We would go even further, and say that pious Jews, like Philo of Alexandria, did in fact "follow Jesus" in this true sense, though they did not bear his name, and were not reckoned among his disciples.

But let us press the matter further. Would it be possible for a good Hindu, or a good Buddhist, to "follow Jesus," in the true sense, and yet to remain a good Hindu or a good Buddhist? We believe that it would be more than possible: it would be well nigh inevitable for whoever really lived up to the essence of the Indian teachings. And we believe that the Master would accept such a following of him, as sufficient for salvation, for the inheritance of eternal life.

Let us suppose that the young man who came to Jesus had been a good Hindu or a good Buddhist. Jesus would have bade him keep the Commandments. When the young man asked, which? Jesus could have answered, from the Buddhist scriptures:

"Abstinence from destroying life; abstinence from theft; abstinence from fornication and all uncleanness; abstinence from lying."

Would this have differed in essential moral value from the answer he did give? Or, in other words, did that answer "exclude" that which is the essence of Buddhist teaching?

To approach the matter in another way. Let us suppose that, instead of being born in Palestine, Jesus had been born in India, among Hindus or among Buddhists. Have we any good reason to believe that he would have found Hinduism or Buddhism alien to his spirit, any more than he found what was excellent in Judaism alien to his spirit? Could he not have delivered his message as completely, could he not have lived his life and exemplified his method as perfectly in India as in Palestine, with the Vedas and Upanishads as his background, instead of the Law and the Prophets? Would not the essential result have been the same? May we not, then, believe that it was not so much a special fitness in Palestine, which drew him thither, but rather the crying need of the Western world?

Is it not time, then, that those who honour Jesus, as the writer of this pamphlet so evidently honours him, should do him the justice of seeing what is vital in his teachings, and what is but the clothing of this vital part, as truth is clothed in parable? And is it not here that Theosophy can be of the utmost help, bringing its universal view of spiritual things, its vital realization of the processes of spiritual life, eternally the same under many vestures?

Jesus was a Theosophist, in that he exemplified, both by his life and in his teaching, the venerable spiritual laws, the law of resurrection, the law of the new birth from above. He had reached his real resurrection long before his death. It was in the body of that real resurrection that he showed himself to his disciples in the Transfiguration. And in virtue of that real Resurrection he was able, after the death of the physical body, to manifest himself in what we have come to think of as his resurrection. In virtue of that real resurrection he is. The problem is, to find him; and this can be done only by living the life he lived, by following the method which that life exemplifies: in other words—by applied Theosophy.

Returning to our pamphlet, we find the supposed "fundamental differences between Christianity and Theosophy" illustrated in this way: "In Ceylon, there is a state of open war. Singhalese Buddhism, which was in a somewhat lethargic condition, has been galvanized into fresh life by the efforts of Western Theosophists; a regular campaign against Christian work is carried on; rival schools are opened with the deliberate intention of ruining Christian schools; Mission schools have been repeatedly burned down in the night, and the crime is laid at the door of Buddhist Theosophists."

Again "by their fruits ye shall know them." Genuine Theosophy will never bear fruits like that, nor express itself in attacks on Christian schools; though it may point to certain misunderstandings, as travesties, rather than true expressions, of the teachings of Christ. But it does this from love of Christianity, never from hatred of Christianity. In Mme. H. P. Blavatsky's words: "Once more we have to beg the reader not to lend an ear to the charge against Theosophy in general and the writer in particular—of disrespect toward one of the greatest and noblest characters in the history of Adeptship—Jesus of Nazareth—nor even of hatred to the Church."

Genuine Theosophy, therefore, would never attack Christianity. Neither would genuine Hinduism or genuine Buddhism. The Buddha's attitude toward the older faiths of his land was perfectly tolerant. He stood toward the Vedic religion exactly as Jesus stood toward Judaic religion, taking it as his starting point, and developing its moral essence. Here is a characteristic instance, from the *Maha Vagga*:

"The Blessed One drew near to where the Goatherd's banyan tree was.

"There a certain Brahman, who was of a proud and contemptuous disposition, drew near to where The Blessed One was; and having drawn near, he exchanged greetings with The Blessed One, and spoke to The Blessed One as follows:

" 'Gotama, what is it that constitutes a Brahman, and what are the Brahman-making qualities.'

"Then The Blessed One, concerning this, on that occasion, breathed forth this solemn utterance,—

> " 'The Brahman who his evil traits hath banished,
> Is free from pride, is self-restrained and spotless,
> Is learned, and the holy life hath followed,
> 'Tis he alone may claim the name of Brahman;
> With things of earth he hath no point of contact.' "

This is a close parallel to the story of the young man with great possessions. The Brahman's question was, in essence, the same, "What must I do to be saved?" The Teacher's answer also was in essence the same; he sent the questioner back to the vital things of his own religion; and yet, though, like the Master of Galilee, he asked for no dogmatic adhesion, his answer was, in the spiritual sense "Follow me"; for the essential things of the older Brahmanism are also the essential things of the Buddha's teaching, in that they are the essential things of all religion.

Another example of the Buddha's attitude from the *Tevijja Sutta*:

The Buddha came to the Brahman village in Kosala which is called Manasakata. Now at that time many very distinguished and wealthy

Brahmans were staying there. And a conversation sprang up between two of them, Vasettha and Bharadvaja, concerning the path which leads to union with Brahma. They referred the dispute to the Buddha, who asked them whether they themselves or their teachers, Brahmans versed in the Three Vedas, had seen Brahma face to face.

They answered that neither they nor their teachers had seen Brahma.

The Blessed One said:

"Verily, Vasettha, that those Brahmans versed in the Three Vedas, *but omitting the practice of those qualities which really make a man a Brahman,* and adopting the practice of those qualities which really make men not Brahmans,—that they, by reason of their invoking and praying and hoping and praising, should, after death and when the body is dissolved, become united with Brahma,—verily, such a condition of things has no existence."

The Buddha's perfect tolerance is not less striking than his intense moral earnestness; but most striking is the identity between his method, as here shown, and the method of Jesus, in dealing with the older faiths which they found in possession of the hearts of their hearers. These older faiths they accepted, laying stress on their spiritual essence, and making them the basis and point of departure of their own teaching. There was no violence, no attack, no solution of continuity, but a quiet and orderly outgrowth from the already existing and accepted faith.

To the Buddhists of Ceylon, therefore, and to the Mission schools, we offer, for their thoughtful consideration, the great Edict on Toleration, issued by King Asoka of Pataliputra, in the third century before Christ:

"His Majesty does reverence to the men of all religions, whether ascetics or householders, by donations and various modes of reverence.

"His Majesty, however, cares not so much for donations or external reverence, as that there should be a growth of the essence of the matter in all religions. The growth of the essence of the matter assumes various forms, but the root of it is restraint of speech, to wit, *a man must not do reverence to his own religion by disparaging that of another man.*"

We come now to the specific doctrine which appears to be at present the centre of one dogmatic system: the announcement that a youthful Madrasi is to be used for a Divine Incarnation, an Avatar. The writer of the pamphlet describes these theories in detail, and evidently supposes that they are the result of visions, or supposed visions, of an individual.

This does not appear to be the case. In this system, as here set forth, on the authority of passages from its text-books, we recognize certain familiar elements; first, fragments of the letters of the

Master K. H., embodied in *Esoteric Buddhism;* next, shreds and patches from *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine;* and, third, things which, in the early days of The Theosophical Society, were reported, often, perhaps, incorrectly, as having been said by Mme. H. P. Blavatsky.

Now it is very risky to use Mme. Blavatsky's books in this way, for the following reason: It was Mme. Blavatsky's habit to put forward what she had to say somewhat indirectly, supporting her position largely by quotations from writers on religion, philosophy and mysticism, in encyclopedic variety and abundance. Very often, the exoteric writings conveyed only a part of what Mme. Blavatsky had in mind. Sometimes they distorted even that part. Often they were quoted, only to be contradicted. And we have to use very great care, in reading Mme. Blavatsky's writings, if we are to distinguish between passages of these different classes; and only as we do distinguish correctly, can we be sure of having what Mme. Blavatsky really wished to convey.

In the dogmatic system, as set forth in this pamphlet, the references to races and sub-races appear to be taken from *Esoteric Buddhism.* The references to Hermes, Zoroaster, Orpheus and Siddhartha appear to have been drawn, somewhat confusedly, from *The Secret Doctrine.*

But the author is very far from embodying the views of Mme. Blavatsky in the curious system we have been considering, though, as we saw, Mme. Blavatsky's books supply the starting-point of some of its ideas. What Mme. Blavatsky herself thought of the Western Avatar and his work, was set forth in the "Notes and Comments" of THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY for January, 1913.

It seems, therefore, that this part of the new system is a conglomerate of older fragments, skillfully cemented together, often, perhaps, to the detriment of their original relation. On this somewhat heterogeneous foundation, is built the specific Avatar doctrine.

At this point, it may be wise to remind ourselves of the real teaching concerning Avatars. A fundamental passage is in the *Bhagavad Gita* (iv, 6—9).

"Though unborn, an unpassing Self, Lord of All beings, resting on my own nature, I am born through the magical power (*mâyâ*) of my Self.

"For whenever there is a waning of righteousness, an outbreak of unrighteousness, then I put my Self forth,

"For the salvation of the holy, and for the destruction of evil-doers; to establish righteousness, I am born in age after age (*yuga*)."

The same teaching is preserved even in popular Buddhism. In the introduction to the *Jataka,* for example, we are presented with a picture of the future Buddha, in heaven, surrounded by the Four Maharajas and the gods, who reminded him of his high destiny, to become incarnate "in order to save the world." The future Buddha then discerning the time, the land, the family, in which he should be born, "died out of heaven and was conceived in the womb of queen Mahâmâyâ."

The Brahman seers made this announcement to the divinely chosen queen: "You will bear a son. And he, if he continue to live the household life, will become a universal monarch, but if he leave the household life and retire from the world, he will become a Buddha, and roll back the clouds of sin and folly of this world."

Let us consider the Western parallel of this teaching. The *Bhagavad Gita* began by depicting the Divine Being, unborn, unchanging, Lord of all beings. This aspect of the divine Logos is very fully set forth by Philo of Alexandria, who appears to have been born some ten or twenty years before Jesus; and whose most important writings on the doctrine of the Logos appear to have been completed about 20 A. D. Philo speaks of the "One, uncreated, imperishable, the ruler and Lord of the universe." In or beside this immutable Eternal, there is the Thought, or Mind, or Logos, of God. The Logos is a divine image of God. All things were created through the Logos. Every man in regard to his intelligence is connected with the divine Logos, being an impression, or a fragment, or a ray, of that blessed nature. Therefore man is the sacred temple for an intelligent soul, the image of which he carries in his heart.

"Since, therefore," says Philo, "God invisibly enters into this region of the soul, let us prepare that place to be an abode worthy of God. For if, when we are about to receive kings, we prepare our houses to wear a more magnificent appearance, what sort of habitation ought we to prepare for the King of kings, for God the ruler of the whole universe, condescending, in his mercy and lovingkindness for man, to visit the beings whom he has created, and to come down from the borders of heaven to the lowest regions of the earth, for the purpose of benefitting our race? Shall we prepare him a house of stone or wood? . . . No, a pious soul is his fitting abode." (*De Cherubim,* 29, 30.)

The writer of the Fourth Gospel took this doctrine of the Logos as the background of the life of Jesus, whom he identified wth the Logos, become incarnate for the salvation of mankind:

"In the beginning was the Word [Logos] and the Word [Logos] was with God, and the Word [Logos] was God. All things were made by [or, through] him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light

shineth in the darkness; and the darkness apprehended [or, overcame] it not . . .

"And the Word [Logos] became flesh, and dwelt [tabernacled] among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father) [or, an only begotten from a father] full of grace and truth . . .

"Of his fulness we all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by [or, through] Moses; grace and truth came by [or, through] Jesus Christ."

We have quoted from the *Revised Version* of the New Testament, including marginal readings, in order that fine shades of meanings may be preserved. John, therefore, regards Jesus as an incarnation of the Logos, "the true light, which lighteth every man coming into the world." As a parallel to the phrase, "the only begotten son," we may quote these words of Philo: "The Father of the universe has caused him (the Logos) to spring up as the eldest son, whom, elsewhere, he calls his firstborn." (*De Confusione Linguarum,* 14.)

John, therefore, regards Jesus as an incarnation of the Logos, in glory like the Logos, which is the "eldest son," "the firstborn of the Father." Let us come now to the claims which Jesus made for himself, as recorded by John, asking ourselves whether they are an expression of the doctrine of the Avatar, the incarnation of the Logos, as we have found it in the Eastern teachings.

Speaking to Nicodemus, Jesus said: "No man hath ascended into heaven but he that descended out of heaven, even the Son of man [which is in heaven]. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life." (John iii, 13.) Jesus, therefore, speaking of himself as the Son of man, declares that he has descended out of heaven, to bring eternal life to mankind.

It is not clear whether the verses which immediately follow are spoken by John of Jesus, or by Jesus of himself. In the first case, which seems to be most probable, John is once more setting forth the Logos doctrine; or, if Jesus be the speaker, he is applying the terms of that doctrine to himself.

Speaking to the woman of Samaria, Jesus declares himself to be the Messiah, the Anointed, the Christ, the "Lord long looked for" by the Jews, and his acts throughout his ministry consistently maintained that position.

Again, we find Jesus saying to the Jews:

"My Father worketh even until now, and I work . . . The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father doing: for what

things soever he doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner. For the Father loveth the Son and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and greater works than these will he show him, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son also quickeneth whom he will. For neither doth the Father judge any man, but he hath given all judgment unto the Son; that all may honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which sent him." (John v, 17-23.)

It appears to us that the claims which Jesus thus makes for himself are completely in harmony with the Avatar doctrine, the teaching of the Logos incarnate "for the salvation of the holy, and for the destruction of evil doers." Jesus in fact declared himself to be an Avatar, in the time-honoured symbolic phrases; and all his teaching is entirely consistent with that character, as are the events of his life, from the Incarnation to the Resurrection and Ascension.

We return now to the system under discussion, and to the specific declaration that a Hindu boy is to be an Avatar. Whether this declaration be true or not, can be tested but in the one way; by his fruits he shall be known. But as to the teaching of the system, it has already borne fruits, and therefore can be known. What may be its scientific value is a question we do not at present raise; but quite clearly it should not be called Theosophy, in the sense in which that high and splendid name is implied by the principles on which the Theosophical Society was founded.

Summing up this system, the writer of the pamphlet asks: "What is the authority for all this?" and shows that the followers of its promulgator are asked to accept it practically on personal assertion. This brings us to the vital question: What is the true Theosophic teaching concerning "authority"? Is it not that each man must be his own authority?—that he must prove the faith *in his own life?* For in no other way can he do this. "For within you is the light of the world—the only light that can be shed upon the Path. If you are unable to perceive it within you, it is useless to look for it elsewhere." The true teacher is the man's own soul, the ray of the Logos in him, as Philo said. The Master leads him to that; this is what Jesus did.

We hear, in this pamphlet, of many preparations for the work of the coming Avatar. This leads us to ask ourselves, What is the true way to prepare for an Avatar's coming? How are we to "prepare the way before him, and make his path straight"? It would seem that we can do this in but one way: by *living the life.* It has been said that in the footsteps of a million men, Buddha passed through the gates of gold.

It was not because his coming was not announced, that Jesus came to the Cross. He *was* announced, universally expected, and personally indicated by John the Baptist, himself sent specially for that purpose. Those to whom he came, failed to receive him, because they failed to live the life: because they were not, in fact, practical Theosophists. Exactly the same principle holds today. If, to use the words of the Precursor, we would "make straight the way of the Lord," we must *live the life; we* must be practical Theosophists, in the true meaning of that high but (because so high) much misunderstood word.

Sun Worship.

I

The Sun, as the great centre of power and the upholder of all things, was the Blackfeet's supreme object of worship. He saw that every bud and leaf and blossom turned its face towards the Sun as the source of its life and growth; that the berries he ate reddened and ripened under its warmth; that men and animals thrived under its sustaining light, but all perished when it was withdrawn. The Sun made the grass to grow and the trees to be covered with foliage for the subsistence of birds and animals, upon which he himself in turn depended for food. The devout Blackfoot therefore called upon men, women and children and everything that had breath to worship the all-glorious, all powerful Sun-God who fills the heavens with brightness and the earth with life and beauty.

Walter McClintock: *The Old North Trail.*

II

Let us add that the vitality given to the will by the prayer of simplicity will not, perhaps, be perceived at once. So under the Sun's action, a vast work of growth goes on in the meadows and forests; and yet all these hidden sources of life do their part slowly and in silence. All those million molecules of sap circulate like a crowd of workmen engaged in the construction of a house. So with the prayer of simplicity, the soul is a field exposed to the Divine Sun. The growth carried on is a silent one, but it is a real work.

Rev. Fr. Aug. Poulain, S.J.: *The Graces of Interior Prayer.*

FRAGMENTS

On the Three Vows

BEFORE active discipleship is possible there must be preparation. Christ had thirty years of preparation for three years of service. In those years of preparation we take the three vows,—poverty, chastity, obedience. And these vows are no mere surface or exterior acts; they are conditions of personal consciousness to be made inherent parts of ourselves.

The first vow to be taken is poverty; the heart must be utterly emptied of itself; and for the completion of this we pass into the "Wilderness." All the saints have spoken of the dryness they have known, the dark hours when even prayer was distasteful. As says *Light On The Path,* few pass through this experience without bitter complaint. Yet it is an essential process, when one by one everything is surrendered, even those spiritual consolations whose absence it is so difficult to endure, or even to understand. This process, if not complete the first time, must be repeated, and therefore is often repeated. Even the least sediment of remaining self-seeking, will draw to itself, subtly, other particles of like nature; and then once more the dark days must come, lest again we should fall back into the slavery we were leaving and which we must leave behind forever if the goal is to be won. The disciple dreads only the slavery to himself; all other slavery is but a shadow, and has no meaning for him. So that the "freedom" sought by men today, appears in his eyes as the shackles of a heavy bondage. The Kingdom is promised to the poor in spirit,—hence our poverty must include this of the spirit also, in glad submission.

When the heart is altogether emptied we are ready for the second vow, only possible of taking when our own tainted possessions are removed, that the divine purity of the Master may fill us in their stead. Were he to pour his Grace into a polluted vessel, it would

itself become polluted also. Therefore, the vessel must be cleansed. True chastity does not consist alone in outward form or restriction; it is the undimmed reflection in human heart and mind and will of the radiant Whiteness of the Father. When this vow has been taken we become Tabernacles of the Holy Ghost.

Cleansed by poverty, filled with his purity (who alone is pure), we may see him,—since the pure in heart see God,—and then for the first time seeing, may recognize and understand his will. So we take our third vow, that of obedience; until then impossible of taking save in dim distorted fashion, but now clearly, definitely, and so with joy. Let us not ignore the part that Joy plays in discipleship, lest we confuse ourselves. While there is *effort* in these matters we are aspirants, struggling upwards; and all effort is adjoined to pain. But from that pain and aspiration mingled, Love is born,—and all things done for love are full of joy. Therefore, that which appears as suffering from below, the disciple knows as ecstacy. These things are a mystery, as part of the Mysteries. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

When the three vows are taken we may venture to work without danger to others or ourselves,—without that gravest danger of thwarting His will and hindering His plan.

CAVÉ.

THE EASTERN CHURCH

II

History to the Separation

AFTER the supreme eminence of the Nicaean Council one looks in vain for any special ecclesiastical vantage point from which to scan the long reach of years which stretches before us down to the present day and the Church of Modern Russia. Particularly is it difficult when committed to an attitude of universal tolerance, of sympathetic comprehension toward one and all of the various sects which we see crystallizing in such rapid succession.

Folded unquestionably within the walls of any one of the old separatist churches we could unerringly single out the supremely critical event or council, the battlefield where all outside Christendom met its Waterloo; with the Caldean Christians we should deem the ghosts of the Fathers of Ephesus the only foemen worthy of our steel, their condemnation and banishment of Nestorius in the year 431 A.D. a still living issue, the third council the final gathering of the Church; ensconced within the great and widespread Armenian Church, we should still continue hurling anathemas at the vanished Arians, blind to the fact that aught outside, worthy the name of religion, survived the shock of Chalcedon; or with the Churches of Egypt and Syria, likewise jealously guarding the old Nicene Creed in all its pristine originality, we should take our stand solely on the first three councils, since at the fourth the changes and conditions proposed first at Constantinople and rejected at Ephesus were formally sanctioned and approved. As in this form it has descended practically unchanged to us, and is accepted alike by Protestant and Catholic, by the East and the West, it is interesting to insert it here in both guises, noting the sanctioned alterations by printing the additions in italics, the omitted words in parentheses.

"We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker *of heaven and earth,* of all things both visible and invisible: And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father *before all worlds* (only begotten, that is to say, of the substance of the Father, God of God), Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made, (both things in heaven and things in earth)—who for us men and for our salvation came down *from the heavens* and was made flesh *of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary* and was made man *and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate and* suffered *and was buried* and rose again on the third day; *according to the Scriptures;* went up into the heavens and is to come again *with glory* to judge the quick and the dead, *and of his kingdom there shall be no end.* And I believe in the Holy Ghost,

the Lord, and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spake by the Prophets: And I believe one Catholic and Apostolic Church: I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins: And I look for the Resurrection of the dead: And the Life of the world to come. (But those that say "there was when He was not" and "before he was begotten He was not" and that "He came into existence from what was not" or who profess that the Son of God is of a different "person" or "substance," or that He is created, or changeable, or variable, are anathematized by the Catholic Church.)"

Probably the expressions introduced concerning the Incarnation and the Passion were intended but as slight amplifications and explanations, yet since they drew more sharply the line of dogma, they held the germs which later fructified into rigid systems; while the enlargements upon the attributes of the Spirit gave the opening for the addition of the words "and the Son," which was the theological excuse for the cleavage between the two great historic churches. It is this grand division which to us, lacking any superior seat of the scornful, must supply a large part of the story of the Eastern as well as of the Western Church; for whose full understanding we have to drag ourselves wearily from Rome to Constantinople, through the wars of the Crusades, and more specifically from Council to Council, no one of which holds any paramount interest over those which precede or follow it. In each the discussions are as labored and interminable, the questions at issue as involved and trivial, courtesy and mutual forbearance as uniformly lacking. They clang on the mental ear with the monotonous din of a boiler factory, where each blow aimed at a petty rivet makes the whole welkin ring. Without dwelling on such a case of exceptional fury, as when the Bishop of Constantinople was tramped down and stamped to death by the Bishop of Alexandria, an authentic scene taken verbatim from the Report of Chalcedon will serve well enough as a sample, and will sound the note of the whole dreary series. The moment is when the historian Theodoret, a most excellent Bishop of Cyrus, entered the assembly.

"Then the most reverend the Bishops of Egypt, Illyria and Palestine shouted out 'Mercy upon us! The Faith is destroyed! Turn him out! Turn out the teacher of Nestorious!' On the other hand, the most reverend the Bishops of the East, of Thrace, of Pontus, and of Asia shouted out, 'We were compelled to sign our names to blank papers, we were scourged into submission! Turn out the Manichaeans! Turn out the adversaries of the Faith!' Dioscorus, the most reverend Bishop of Alexandria, said 'Why is Cyril to be turned out? It is he whom Theodoret has condemned!' The most reverend the Bishops of the East shouted out, 'Turn out the murderer Dioscorus! Who knows not the deeds of Dioscorus? Theodoret is worthy—worthy!' The most reverend the Bishop of Egypt shouted, 'Don't call him Bishop, he is

no Bishop! Turn out the fighter against God! Turn out the defamer of Christ!' The most reverend the Bishops of the East shouted out, 'The orthodox for the Synod! Turn out the rebels—turn out the murderers!'" And so on and on, with insistent, interminable vituperation till the Imperial officers stopped the clamor as "unworthy a meeting of Christian Bishops."

As one visits in turn Constantinople and Ephesus, Chalcedon, twice again Constantinople, and finally once more Nicaea, one sighs for the towering, pacific strength of a Constantine, for the might of an Athanasius, even though one realizes with growing clearness the futility of their effort at unification. In the long retrospect it is to be wondered if their dream, could it have been realized, would have worked ultimate good. The variations in race, in language, in education, which evidenced themselves at Nicaea, were too fundamental to be glossed over from above; the fusion would have been premature, such radical differences would but have cancelled one another rather than have added themselves to a common sum total. Better perhaps that each instead should use the Creed as a lamp to spy out differences, until such time as each shall have worked out its own salvation in trembling fear of corruption and so be made ready for the reduction to a great common denominator.

The controversies became ever more narrow, hard and polemical, until suddenly the Church awoke with a rude shock to the advent of Mahometanism. It may be a wide stretch of the term to include this seemingly alien faith within the category of heretical churches, yet there is ground for regarding Mahomet not as the founder of a new religion, but, as does Dante in the Inferno, as one of the chief heresiarchs. The many legends of his friendship with the Nestorian monk, known sometimes as Sergius, sometimes as Bahari, all point to the fact that through this wandering heretical son the Eastern Church exercised a powerful control over the rising fortunes of Islam; while his account of the Lord Jesus is undoubtedly compiled from the local stories supplied him by the Syrian Christians, as well as from the apocryphal gospels. Common ancestry and traditions no doubt account largely for the fact that many peculiarities of the Greek Church have here their counterpart, for the frantic excitement of the old oriental religions still lingers in their modern representatives; both the mad gambols of the Greek and Syrian pilgrims around the chapel of the Holy Sepulchre, and the frenzy of the Mussulman dervishes, are distinctively oriental; both belong to those wild forms of religion which St. Paul labored to restrain amongst the first Christian converts. Be this as it may, not only has the Greek Church been in turn deeply affected by unceasing conflict with this, its chief enemy, but the sword of Islam checked the policy and restrained the passions of the churches and nations of all Europe during the Middle Ages. The Crusades owe their origin entirely to this conflict. The Spanish Church and monarchy rose out of a crusade of its own, and still bears the stamp of the Orient in architecture, manners and fierce

bigotry; the agitations of the Reformation were constantly arrested by terror of the Sultan; while the English Prayer-book today shows a trace of this panic-fear in the collect for Good Friday, when the Turk is prayed for together with other heretics and infidels. Much of its progress, possibly its rise, can be traced to the dissensions so rife at that time in the Christian East, which we may sum up in the quaint words of Dean Prideaux:

"For they having drawn the abstrusest niceties into controversies which were of little or no moment to that which is the chief end of our Holy Christian Religion, and divided and subdivided about them into endless schisms, did thereby so destroy that peace, love, and charity which the Gospel was given to promote; and instead thereof continually provoked each other to that malice, rancour and every evil work, that they lost the whole substance of their religion while they thus eagerly contended for their own imaginations concerning it, and in a manner drove Christianity out of the world. So that at length having wearied the patience and long suffering of God by thus turning this Holy Religion into a firebrand of hell for contention, strife and violence among them, He raised up the Saracens to be the instrument of his wrath; who taking advantage of the weakness of power and distractions of councils, soon overran with a terrible devastation all the Eastern Provinces of the Roman Empire. And when the matter came to this trial, many who were the hottest contenders became the first apostates from Christianity; and they who would not afore part with a nicety or an abstruse notion for the peace of the Church, were soon brought by the sword at their throat to give up the whole in compliance to a barbarous conqueror. And no wonder that such who had afore wrangled away the substance, and had eat out the very heart of it by malice and rancour became easily content when under this force to part with the name also."

The most deep rooted of the causes leading to all these many subdivisions was undoubtedly the racial. We have seen how almost immediately the more alien races of the remote East segregated themselves, incapable of either comprehending or approving the subtle changes advanced and advocated by the learned contingent of the Latins and the Greeks. These two, at first closely knit by their common Aryan tie, diverged slowly but diametrically, as the one became infused with the vigorous blood of the invading Goths, the other with that of the more sluggish Sclavs. More and more plainly we discern the organizing, practical tendencies of the West, pushing forward to political pre-eminence; more and more pronounced became the philosophical speculative tendencies of the East, holding with fervid intensity to custom and precedent; the one proudly winning its title of Catholic, the other as proudly defending the name of Orthodox.

Next after this fundamental difference of race, and though much nearer the surface, still a basic cause for the great schism, comes the rivalry between the Eastern and the Western Empires. When Con-

stantine, partly at least in a revulsion against the essential paganism of Rome, founded his Christian capital on the Bosphorous, he started a rift doomed inevitably to widen into a chasm. Instantly we note in the proceedings of the Council of Constantinople, the first convened after the establishment of the new city, an added touch of jealousy, fresh rivalries forced and fostered, a more stringent guarding of privilege and power. While the prelates of Constantinople gained forthwith in the prestige of royal support, a support speedily to become a synonym for despotism, the see of Rome gained in her unrivaled supremacy in the West as sole protector of the Faith in military as well as ecclesiastical crises. The freedom insured through neglect inevitably evolved the ability for decisive action and the keen political judgment for which Rome has ever been pre-eminent. After the ignominous failure of the exarch at Ravenna, first Leo and then Gregory stepped into the breach and saved both the Church and civilization from the scourge of the Huns. Rome became but nominally subject to the East as its suzerain lord, and when on Christmas day, A.D. 800, the Pope definitely sought the protection of the rising power across the Alps by crowning Charles the Great, "the usurping Frank," as Emperor, the break was complete.

Upon the background of these two causes—the psychology of race and the irresistible current of world-history—emerges the more obvious and easily traced course of purely ecclesiastical events; the bickerings and back-bitings of successive prelates; disputes as to the proper seat of the right of ultimate appeal; questions of precedence and governmental adjustments; through an endless succession of ponderous tomes. Deplorable though the story is, there are amusingly human touches, as when Gregory the Great assumes so self-righteous a tone of humility to gravely rebuke the pride of John the Faster for assuming the title of Oecumenical Bishop, firmly oblivious of the high papal claims already being made, grounded on his succession to Peter as the foundation-rock of the Church—a claim, by the way, which might well have been disputed by the Church of Antioch on the score of descent from the first apostle.

The conflict between pope and patriarch reached so acute a stage in the ninth century that we find synod after synod convened in rapid succession, each party as it secured the necessary majority roundly anathematizing the other, now with the scorn of the finished Greek scholar for the ruder Latin civilization, now with the disgust of the practical West for the hairsplitting subtleties of the East.

The final rupture came in the year 1054, when the papal legates formally laid on the altar of St. Sophia a sentence of anathema denouncing eleven evil doctrines of the then Patriarch Michael Cerularius and his supporters. Chief of these doctrines was his opposition to the famous "Filioque Clause," "The Double Procession of the Spirit." The dispute is whether, as maintained by the Eastern Church, the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father alone, through the Son; or, as asserted by Rome, through the Father and the Son as a joint source. It is this doctrinal nicety,

scarcely less subtle than the Arian controversy itself, which was the immediate cause of the most momentous fact in the Christendom of the Middle Ages. For almost a thousand years it, together with some negligible points of interpretation and of government, has held apart these two great branches of the Church, and yet viewed by us through the perspective of the years it dwindles into a bare and bald excuse for a predetermined severance, into a thin disguise for the cloaking of personal and political animosities; a diminutive difference beside which the mass of tradition and belief inherited by each from their centuries of affiliation, looms large indeed. Hand in hand they built up custom and usage, doctrine and creed; the East as the formulator of thought and theory, the West as the instrument which put them into external practice. Even in the East's special field of orthodoxy, it was "Leo's time" which once and for all settled the question for the entire Church, but it was the close thinking of the learned Greeks which he thus embodied. Again it was the West which turned the introspective monasticism of Mt. Athos and of Studium into such working organizations as the Franciscans and the Benedictines.

It would take more than the scales of human judgment to weigh the merits of the two modes of piety, the one of works and the one of contemplation. The results of the first are more patent and easily discerned about us today, but till the close of the Middle Ages asceticism and sanctity were all but interchangeable terms. It was the mysticism of the cloistered monk, the rigid life of the solitary hermit, roughly clad, meagerly fed, exposed to wind and weather, which fired the popular imagination and roused the enthusiasm of the multitude for the things of the spirit. Again and again an anchorite, trained by the discipline of solitude, was called from his retreat to fill some high post, and responding to the unwelcome summons, proved the power gained through detachment.

Yet undoubtedly Basil, to whose genius the cenobite system owes its origin, drew his rooted distaste to the hermit life from wide personal observation of its abuses. We learn in the account of Paladius of men driven mad through the cruelty and self-immolation of their lives, of others thrown back into grossest excess through the overstrain of deprivation and want. Such extremes Basil summarily checks in his beneficent rule, and though himself a strict ascetic, cautions them, "If fasting hinders you from labor, it is better to eat like the workman of Christ that you are." His deepest objection to the life of the anchorite, however, is that it gives scope only for the exercise of the first two virtues of the monastic vow—"poverty, chastity and obedience"—and that it precludes humility, the sinking of the personal self in the common life. "Whose feet wilt thou wash? Whom wilt thou serve? How canst thou be last of all if thou art alone?" he pertinently inquires. It was his deep aversion to idleness which first introduced the habit of industry as one of the elements of the religous orders; yet despite its general acceptance, it is

essentially alien to the highest ideal of Eastern asceticism, strictly interpreted. That has ever been the life of contemplation, meditation, illumination. In devotion to this ideal, in whole-hearted reverence for the Hermit on the Pillar, even the factions of the early councils maintained an unswerving loyalty. And in this reverence the West joined with the East. Both today can trace their common ancestry back through Basil and Pachomius to St. Anthony; perhaps even to St. Paul himself, if credence is given to the shadowy legend of his hermit-life on the shore of the Red Sea. Both alike have their faint tinge of the hue with which the first anchorites were colored by contact with the Gnostics and the Montanists. Both are still vaguely stamped by the influence of the Indian Therapeutæ over the first Egyptian monks.

To the communities of the specifically Eastern monasteries, all civilization owes an unmeasured debt. It was here that the very life of art and letters was preserved through the Dark Ages; here the world's legacy of priceless manuscripts was guarded and treasured; here were written those first marvellous hymns of devout adoration; and hence issued, in the fifteenth century, the scholarship which contributed more than any one cause to the Revival of Letters and the German Reformation; and most incomparable gift of all, a copy of the New Testament in the original Greek tongue.

Small marvel that the Eastern Church feels itself indubitably the parent stem from which all branches, Protestant and Catholic, orthodox and heterodox, have sprung. This honor we may frankly concede them, "glad that there is a theology in the world of which the free genial mind of Chrysostom is still the golden mouth-piece," rejoicing in the thought of such calm strength resting quietly and confidently on its base of hereditary belief.

The story of the growth and development of its youngest daughter, the Church of Russia, demands the space of an entire article; by the complete severance of Rome, the field was left clear on which to trace her course from the picturesque beginning of Vladimir's romantic conversion, down to her present condition of vital importance to all Christendom —perhaps even, with a bit of imaginative prevision, on, a little way into the future.

ANNE EVANS.

(To be continued.)

LETTERS TO FRIENDS

IX

DEAR FRIEND:

I AM sorry for the disappointment and hurt which your letter reflects—still more sorry for the tinge of bitterness that infused the mood in which you wrote. For though suffering can melt the heart, till like molten metal it may be poured forth from the confining walls of self, bitterness only corrodes and hardens it. We cannot avoid suffering. I think, when we see more deeply and truly into life, we shall not wish to avoid it. But we can keep, meanwhile, from being bitter.

There are those who will tell you that all joy and pain are Maya —mere delusions: that the true Self is above them both, knowing neither one nor the other, but living in an unchanging eternal state of blessedness and peace. There is truth in this. But it is a truth most often distorted into falsehood. So the Christian Scientist denies his pain, till his face is stamped with that set meaningless smile which marks his isolation from reality. So the modern Stoic, misreading the great ancient philosophy, hardens his heart against all feeling, till his only contact with the warm rich life about him is through the cold and barren chambers of his mind. Surely the Master, who said that He had come to bring us life, and life in greater abundance, would not have us so shut ourselves away from what He brings. In His example we can find no turning from suffering, no hardening of His heart against His agony, no refusal to accept and to live to the utmost all that life can bring of joy and pain. He was above them both—proving this by His acceptance of them—but the agony of Gethsemane and the desolation of the cross cannot be read or experienced as mere delusions. Their terrible, triumphant reality cannot be denied, save as we deny the reality of all manifested life.

Were we Buddhists we might make this denial, and not be misled by it. Age long tradition, the inherited mould of mind and temperament, would enable us to interpret its meaning rightly. Reality and unreality are but words—and East and West use them differently. In the East there is but one Reality, and that is God,—the permanent essence of all that is—never to be reached or known, but always to be approached. The shadow of the tree, impermanent, shifting, vanishing and coming again, is unreal. The tree itself, growing from seed to sapling, to maturity and decay, is unreal also. Naught is real, in the whole wide world of living things, of light and shadow and birth and death and love and hate, but the One inmost essence from which all come, to which all again return. Joy and pain are unreal.

So, too, is the heart which feels them. They will pass. The heart will grow cold and die and be reborn. Only the Self endures. Only the Self is real. Looking always to the Self, accepting light or shadow, suffering or happiness, we move and grow towards the Real.

This is the Buddhist view—that Reality is forever wrapped in unreality—that all appearance, all manifestation, is unreal; but that within it, as its essence and central spark of Being, is Reality itself. To the Buddhist, therefore, the path to Reality is not in the rejection and refusal of the unreal, but in its acceptance as the casket of the Real. He refuses only to leave the casket unopened, or to be content to live in the darker shadows when he can draw nearer to the light. For the shadows tell him of the light, and point the way toward it.

Commonly misunderstood throughout the West, as this is, we can come to understand it rightly if we see that it is the Christian view as well. "I am the vine, ye are the branches." "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." The life of the branch is not its own: of itself it can bear no fruit, but must wither and die. Yet, as a branch, the life of the vine is within it, and through it this life grows and flowers and bears fruit and seed. Here is the Christian symbol of the Real: "I in ye and ye in me"; as the branch is in the vine and the life of the vine in the branch; as light is in all colour and all colours are in light. And here, too, it seems to me, is the symbol that can interpret for us joy and suffering.

For the world of personality, the great rich, many coloured world of manifestation, in which as men and women we live our human lives, is but the spread spectrum of the white light of the spirit, refracted from plane to plane through prism after prism of divine and human consciousness. As we lift our own consciousness along this great ascending scale, we come to that point of convergence where we experience as one undivided unit, that which, upon the plane below, appeared widely various and opposed,—as the ultra violet is opposed to the infra red, but both are united in the unrefracted light; or as two branches of a tree are united in the crotch from which they diverge.

I think that it is thus with pleasure and with pain. In themselves, cut away from that life of which they are the carriers, they are unreal and meaningless. But in that life, and as they come to us, they are the opposite poles of one living flame, whose true essence is above them both, but from which both spring and to which both must return. To lose our consciousness of this enkindling fire is to lose hold of life itself. And the nearer we draw to it as we rise above the world of mere appearance, the more of joy and sorrow must we expect the surface of our lives to show. We shall feel ever more and more keenly; but if we are true to our true selves we shall be above and not below that feeling—masters of it, as we

should be of all feeling, not swayed hither and yon as its chance winds may blow.

You know all this. For no man can either love greatly or desire greatly and not experience it. Without love or desire we might feel brute pain or brute content, but could never know either joy or sorrow. These are the shadows of love's upward flight, cast now to the West and now to the East as the sun rises and sets and rises again. Or they are the downward winds from the beating of its wings. Use what simile you will, in love and in desire, so either be great, joy and pain are unified; and no love and no desire has ever been that did not yield them both, in intensity measured by its own.

Knowing this, why do you let yourself forget it? Surely you would not love less or desire less. Your love and desire are your life. And yet, when you resent your pain, when you harden yourself against it and open the door to bitterness instead, you are turning from your love, denying and stultifying your desire. You have, for the moment, fallen from your own true level. You have let your personal consciousness sink beneath the shadows cast by the climbing aspiration of your own heart and soul. It is because you are beneath your pain that you resent it and would cast it from you. That is not the way your life must move. The way lies through the pain—through the shadow, till you reach its source, and center your consciousness once more in the flight of love and desire and effort from which the shadow falls.

Tell me now, why is it that you have felt so disappointed and so hurt? Because you could not have at once all for which you wished? Because my letter gave you no magical formula for your instant transportation to your goal, merely pointing out the first homely commonplace preparations you must make in order to fit yourself to travel? If these be the reasons, or some of them, surely the answer is clear. Would anything be worth having which could be had merely by wishing for it? You know that what you desire is a vital thing—love, consciousness, communion; that your goal is a life, not merely some ecstatic state to which you could be lifted, but a life which must be *your* life and into which you must grow by living. See! The very fact of its present denial, the impossibility of the instant attainment of its fulness, indicates the greatness of its worth. And what is your disappointment but the shadow of your desire? Your goal is great and you greatly desire it. That is the lesson of your pain; in that, you draw near to its heart and essence. And as you accept your pain, and in doing this penetrate toward its source, you will find it quicken and revivify your will. In renewed desire you will rise above your hurt; and pain and joy will be unified in love and effort.

Faithfully yours,

JOHN GERARD.

STORIES OF THE FIRST CHRISTMAS

From the Apocryphal Gospels

ALREADY in the early centuries, there were many lovely stories of the birth and childhood of Jesus; in part the echo of true memories, in part, perhaps, gathered from older faiths, in part the flowers of loving fancy which clung about the strong tree of history. These stories, it was believed, had been told first by Mother Mary, in the days after the Resurrection, when she dwelt at Jerusalem with the disciples and the brethren of Jesus; or they were held to have come from James, the brother of the Lord, memories of old, quiet days in Galilee.

Some of the most beautiful of these stories are gathered about Mother Mary herself; the glory of her child shining back upon her own childhood and on her parents, to whom in their desolate years, she came as a child of promise. They were dwellers in mid Galilee, in the little city of Nazareth; Joachim, the father, of the royal line of David, and Anna, the mother, whose kin were of Bethlehem, far south among the hills. Simple and holy were their lives, filled with quiet toil, consecrated by devout offerings when they journeyed to the temple by the hill of Zion for their solemn festivals, blessed with compassion and gifts to wanderers and to the city's poor, so that but a third of their substance remained for their own use.

Twenty years they lived childless and lonely in Nazareth. They had made a vow that, if a little child came to bless them, they would give it to the Lord to serve in the temple at Zion. In those days Issachar was high priest, and when Joachim came, in the waning days of winter, to make the offerings with the men of the tribe of David at the feast of the dedication, Issachar the high priest mocked at him and spurned him, asking how he, the childless man, was not ashamed to come among those who were blessed with children, for God would not accept the gifts of the childless. Joachim was covered with shame, and stole away downcast, hiding himself among the shepherds on the hills. In the wilderness he pitched his tent, and abode there forty days in fasting and prayer. For he feared the eyes of his neighbors who had heard the high priest's words.

While Joachim dwelt ashamed among the shepherds an angel came to him, comforting him and bidding him be of good cheer, for his prayers were heard and his gifts accepted. God had seen his grief and loneliness and would bless him as Abraham was blessed in

the birth of Isaac. For Isaac came to Sarah in her old age, and Jacob likewise to Rebekah, and Samson and holy Samuel; children of promise after lonely years. So should he be blessed and Anna with him, in the birth of a girl child. Mary they were to name her, and she should serve in the temple, and of her should be born the Son of the Most High, Jesus the Saviour, according to his name. This, said the angel, shall be the sign unto thee: when thou returnest to Jerusalem, coming to the golden gate of the city, thy wife Anna shall meet thee, for she is greatly afraid because of thy absence.

Then the angel departed from Joachim and went to Anna, who was greatly distressed, grieving for her widowhood and for her childlessness. And walking in her garden between noon and sunset, she came to a laurel and sat down under it, grieving and praying that the Lord might bless her as he had blessed Sarah. And looking up to heaven she saw a sparrow's nest in the laurel, and she cried out, Woe is me, for the birds of the air are fruitful, and the waters and the earth, but I am childless.

Then the angel came and stood by her, saying, Anna, the Lord hath heard thee. Fear not, for I am the angel who carried your prayers and gifts to the Lord, and God has sent me to tell you a girl child shall be born to you. You shall call her Mary, and above all the daughters of women shall she be blessed. She shall dwell full of grace in your house till she is three years old; then she shall serve in the temple according to your vow. And from her shall be born the Saviour of all the world. Go now to Jerusalem. At the golden gate thou shalt meet thy husband. Be this a sign that all my words shall be fulfilled.

Then Anna went to Jerusalem, and stood by the gate, and when she saw Joachim coming, she ran, and hanging about his neck, said, Now I know that the Lord hath greatly blessed me. So they rejoiced together and returned to Nazareth, waiting till the promise should be fulfilled. And a girl child was born to them, and they called her Mary, according to the angel's word.

And the child grew and increased in strength every day, so that when she was nine months old, her mother set her upon the ground to see if she could stand, and when she had walked nine steps she came again to her mother's lap. So the child grew, and when she was two years old, Joachim said to Anna, Let us bring her to the temple of the Lord that we may perform our vow. But Anna said, Let us wait a year, lest she should be at a loss to know her father. And Joachim said, Let us then wait.

When Mary had completed her third year, they went up to the temple to give her to the Lord. There was a stairway of fifteen steps, where those going thither sang the psalms of pilgrimage, a psalm for each step. At the foot of the stairs all put on clean raiment. So they set the child down, while they changed their garments. Though

the steps were steep, yet Mary ascended them to the temple, alone and unaided, going bravely forward to the Lord. And the high priest received her and blessed her. And her parents returned to Nazareth.

The Virgin of the Lord grew in the temple as a dove, in years and in perfections. Day by day angels came to her from the Most High, talking with her and guarding her from all harm. So Mary came to her fourteenth year.

The high priest had made an order that the virgins of the temple, when they were of age to wed, should return to their homes, to be given in marriage. The other virgins went not unwillingly, but Mary was not willing to go, for her father and mother had given her to the Lord.

The high priest was in doubt between the vow and the law of the temple. Therefore he sought counsel of the Most High before the ark of the covenant and the mercy seat, and it was made known to him that the Virgin of the Lord should be given in marriage, according to the word of Isaiah the prophet, saying, There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse and a flower shall spring out of its root. And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and piety, and the spirit of the fear of the Lord shall fill him.

Therefore the high priest appointed that all the men of the house of David son of Jesse, who were of estate to be married, should bring each his rod to the altar. And of whomsoever the rod should bud and flower, the Spirit resting on it as a dove, to him the Virgin of the Lord should be given in marriage.

And there came up among the men of the house of David, Joseph of Bethlehem. Being humble and lowly in heart, he drew back his rod when those that stood with him presented their rods to the high priest. And when none of the rods that were presented bore bud or blossom, the high priest was astonished, and made inquiry. And behold it was revealed unto him that one of the men had not brought forth his rod. Therefore he bade Joseph bring forth the rod, and he did so, and behold it sent forth bud and flower, and a heavenly dove rested upon it. Therefore the Virgin of the Lord was given in marriage to Joseph.

It came to pass in those days that the high priest decreed that a new veil should be made for the temple of the Lord. So he took golden thread and blue and scarlet and fine linen and true purple for the veil of the temple. And he sent and brought together the virgins of the temple, and said unto them:

Cast lots now before me, that it may be decided which of you shall spin the golden thread, which the blue, which the scarlet, which the fine linen and which the true purple.

And they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Mary, that she should spin the true purple. And she took it and went to her own house.

And on a certain day Mary took a water pot and went out to draw water, and she heard a voice saying to her:

Hail, thou who art full of grace. The Lord is with thee.

And she looked to the right and to the left to see whence the voice came, but saw no man. Then trembling she went into the house and laying down the water pot she took the true purple which she was working for the veil of the temple, and sat down in her seat to work it.

And behold, Gabriel, the angel of the Lord, stood by her, and the chamber was filled with a miraculous light. And he saluted her courteously and thus addressed her:

Hail Mary, Virgin of the Lord. The Lord is with thee, and thou art blessed above all women born upon the earth.

And because Mary had often beheld the faces of angels and had spoken familiarly with them, she was not afraid at the vision or at the brightness of the light. And Gabriel said unto her:

Fear not, Mary, for thou has found favour in the sight of God. The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee, and thou shalt bear a son who shall be called the Son of the Living God. And thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. And behold thy cousin Elizabeth shall also bear a son in her old age, for nothing is impossible with God. And the son whom thou shalt bear shall be great, reigning from sea to sea, from the rivers even to the ends of the earth. He shall be called the Son of the Most High, for he reigns high in heaven who shall be born lowly upon earth. He shall reign on the throne of David and his kingdom shall have no end. For he is the King of kings and Lord of lords, and his throne is forever and ever.

Then Mary, stretching forth her hands and lifting up her eyes to heaven, said:

Behold, the handmaiden of the Lord. Let it be unto me according to thy word.

And when she had wrought her purple, she carried it to the high priest, and the high priest blessed her, saying:

Mary, the Lord God hath magnified thy name, and thou shalt be blessed in all the ages of the world.

Then Mary, filled with joy, went away to her cousin Elizabeth, and knocked at the door. Which when Elizabeth heard, she ran and opened the door to her, and blessed her, and said:

Whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come unto me?

But Mary lifted up her eyes to heaven, and said:

Lord, what am I, that all the generations of the earth should call me blessed?

And after certain days it came to pass that a decree was sent forth from Augustus Cæsar that all the Jews should be taxed, each in his own city. Joseph therefore arose, and went with Mary his spouse to Jerusalem and then came to Bethlehem, that he and his family might be taxed in the city of his fathers.

Joseph therefore saddled the ass, and set Mary upon it, and went and came toward Bethlehem. Turning about, he saw that Mary was sorrowful; but when he turned about again, he saw her laughing. And he said to her:

Mary, how happens it that I sometimes see sorrow and sometimes joy in thy countenance?

And Mary replied, saying:

I see two people with mine eyes, the one weeping and the other rejoicing.

And they went on again. And Mary said to Joseph:

Take me down from the ass, for the hour has come for my child to be born.

But Joseph answered,

Whither shall I take thee, for the place is desert?

Then Mary said again to Joseph, Take me down.

And Joseph took her down, and he found there a cave and led her into it. And at that time the sun was nigh to his setting.

And leaving her in the cave, he went toward Bethlehem to seek a woman to tend her. And it thus befell:

As I was going, said he, I looked up into the air, and I saw the clouds astonished and the fowls of the air staying in the midst of their flight. And I saw a table spread and workers sitting about it, but they did not move, nor raise the meat to their lips. And I beheld the sheep scattered, and yet the sheep stood still, and came not together. And I looked to the river, and saw kids with their mouths close to the water, but they did not drink.

And Joseph beheld a woman coming down from the mountains, and he besought her, and she went with him to the cave where Mary lay. The sun had set when the woman and Joseph with her reached the cave. And they both entered into it. And a shining cloud overshadowed the cave and on a sudden the cloud became a bright light within the cave, so that their eyes could not bear it. Then the light decreased until the child was born and lay on Mary's breast.

After this, when the shepherds came, and had made a fire, and they were exceedingly rejoicing, the heavenly host appeared to them, praising and adoring the supreme God. And as the shepherds were praising God, the cave seemed like a glorious temple, because both the tongues of men and angels united to adore and magnify God, on account of the birth of the Lord Christ.

But when the woman saw these things, she gave praise to God, and said:

I thank thee, O God, thou God of Israel, for that mine eyes have seen the birth of the Saviour of the world.

Then after ten days they brought the child up to Jerusalem, and on the day appointed they presented him in the temple before the Lord, making the offerings according to the law of Moses.

And Simeon saw him shining as a pillar of light, when Mary his mother carried him in her arms, and the angels stood around him adoring him, as a king's guards stand around him. Then Simeon stretched forth his hands towards Mary and the child, and said:

Now, O my Lord, thy servant shall depart in peace according to thy word. For mine eyes have seen thy mercy, which thou hast prepared for the salvation of all nations; a light to all people, and the glory of thy people Israel.

At that time there arose greater disorder in Bethlehem, because of the coming of wise men from the East to Jerusalem, according to the prophecy of Zoroaster. And the wise men said:

Where is the king of the Jews born? For we have seen his star in the East and are come to worship him.

When Herod the king heard this, he was exceedingly troubled, and sent messengers to the wise men and to the priests, and inquired of them in the town hall, and said unto them:

Where have you it written concerning Christ the king, or where should he be born?

Then they said to him:

In Bethlehem of Judea. For thus it is written: And thou Bethlehem in the land of Judah art not the least among the princes of Judah, for out of thee shall come a ruler, who shall rule my people Israel.

And having sent away the priests, he inquired of the wise men in the town hall, and said unto them:

What sign was it ye saw concerning the king that was born?

And they answered him:

We saw a marvellous great star shining among all the stars of heaven; and it outshined all the other stars, so that they became not visible, and we knew thereby that a great king was born, and therefore we are come to worship him.

Then said Herod unto them:

Go, make diligent inquiry; and if ye find the child, bring me word again, that I may come, and worship him also.

And Mary, because of the disorder in Bethlehem, being in great fear, took the child, and wrapping him up in swaddling clothes, laid him in an ox manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

So the wise men went, and behold, the star which they saw in the

East went before them, till it came and stood over the place where the young child was with his mother.

Then the wise men worshipped him, and brought forth out of their treasures gifts, and gave them to him, gold for his kingship, and myrrh for his priesthood, and frankincense for his divinity.

Then Mary took one of the swaddling cloths in which the infant was wrapped, and gave it to them as a blessing, and they received it from her as a worthy present. And being warned in a dream by an angel that they should not return through Judea to Herod, they departed into their own country by another way. And there appeared to them an angel in the form of that star which had before been their guide in their journey, the light of which they followed till they returned to their own country.

On their return, their kings and princes came to them, inquiring what they had seen and done, and what company they had had on the way, and how they had fared on their journey.

And they brought forth the cloth that Mary had given them, on account whereof they kept a feast. And having made a fire according to the custom of their country they worshipped it, and casting the swaddling cloth into it, the fire took it and kept it. And when the fire was put out, they took forth the swaddling cloth unhurt, as much as if the fire had not touched it. Then they began to kiss it, and put it upon their heads and upon their eyes, saying, This is a wonderful thing, that the fire could not burn it nor consume it.

Then Herod, perceiving that he was mocked by the wise men, commanded certain men to go and to kill all the children that were in Bethlehem, from two years old and under. But an angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph in his sleep, and said, Arise, take the child and his mother, and go into Egypt as soon as the cock crows. So he arose and went.

Elizabeth also, hearing that her son John was about to be searched for, took him and went up unto the mountains, and looked about for a place to hide him; and there was no secret place to be found. Then she groaned within herself, and said:

O mountain of the Lord, receive the mother with the child.

For Elizabeth could not climb up. And instantly the mountain was divided and received them. And there appeared unto them an angel of the Lord to guard them.

But Herod made search after John, and sent servants to Zacharias, when he was ministering at the altar, and they said unto him:

Where hast thou hid thy son?

He replied to them:

I am a minister of the Lord and a servant of the altar; how should I know where my son is?

So the servants went back and told Herod, and the king was wroth, and said:

Is not this son of his like to be king of Israel?

He sent therefore again his servants to Zacharias, saying:

Tell me the truth, where is thy son? For thou knowest that thy life is in my hand.

But Zacharias answered unto the servants:

I am a martyr for God, and if ye shed my blood, the Lord will receive my soul. And know that ye shed innocent blood.

So they slew Zacharias between the entrance of the temple and the altar. And when the people heard of it, they mourned and lamented three days.

And Joseph went down into Egypt with Mary and the child Jesus, and they drew near to a great city in which there was a graven image, to which the other images of the gods of Egypt sent their offerings. And there was by the graven image a priest ministering unto it, and as often as the god spoke out of the image, he related the things that were said, to the inhabitants of Egypt and of all the parts about.

This priest had a son three years old, who was possessed of evil spirits, who uttered many strange things, and rent his clothes, and threw stones at them that came nigh him.

Near to the graven image was the inn of the city, into which when Joseph and Mary were come and the child with them, a great wondering and astonishment fell upon the inhabitants of the city. And all the magistrates and priests assembled before the graven image, and made inquiry, saying:

What means all this consternation and dread that has fallen upon all the people?

Then the graven image made answer and said:

The unknown God is come hither, who is truly God; nor is there anyone besides him who is worthy of divine worship, for he is truly the Son of God. At the fame of him the land trembled, and at his coming it is in commotion, and we ourselves are affrighted at the greatness of his power.

And when it had thus spoken the graven image fell, and at his fall all the inhabitants of Egypt ran together.

But the son of the priest, when his madness came upon him, going into the inn, found there Joseph and Mary, whom all the rest had left and forsaken. And when Mary had washed the swaddling cloth she set it out to dry, and the boy took it and put it upon his head. And immediately the evil spirits left him. And from the time that he was healed, the boy began to sing praises and to give thanks to the word who had healed him.

And when his father saw it, he rejoiced exceedingly and said:

My son, it may be that this child is the Son of the living God, who made heaven and earth. For as soon as he came amongst us,

the graven image was broken and all the gods fell down, and were overcome by a greater power.

Now Joseph and Mary, when they heard that the graven image was fallen down and destroyed, were seized with fear and trembling, and said:

They have driven us forth from Judea because of the child and the saying of the wise men. And now they will drive us out of Egypt also.

And they arose and departed secretly, and went forth into the wilderness by night; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying:

Out of Egypt have I called my son.

JOHN CARLTON.

O Thou, whose eyes are clear, whose eyes are kind, whose eyes are full of pity and of sweetness,—O Thou, lovely One, with Thy face so beautiful,—O Thou, pure One, whose knowledge is without shadow, spotlessly lighted from within,—O Thou, forever shining like the Sun, Thou, Sun-like in the ways of Thy mercy, pour Light upon the world!

AN INVOCATION FROM THE JAPANESE.

BERGSON'S PHILOSOPHICAL POSITION

V

THE eleventh and twelfth centuries saw the beginnings of a new era in the development of Western thought, which foreshadowed the scientific awakening and independence of the strictly modern period in philosophy. Outwardly conforming to Mother Church, the cultivated minority had for many scores of years pursued the study of pagan philosophies and sciences to the disparagement of the narrow ecclesiastical theology and ontology. While the Church was in some measure spiritual and retained the balance of temporal power, this freedom of thought was kept within strict bounds, and too wilful offenders were successfully silenced. But morality was at a very low ebb, laxity of living led to laxity of thought; soon the see at Rome itself became thoroughly corrupted, and authority, the backbone of scholasticism, could no longer be enforced. Already amongst the schoolmen was to be found an attitude of independence, if not of defiance, glossed over by outward acts of conformity and respect. As time went on more and more questions were being asked, theories propounded, investigations undertaken, and conclusions reached and expressed which were subversive of orthodox teaching. The Church attempted the impossible when on the one hand it continued to demand absolute obedience and submission to its doctrines and discipline, while on the other it secretly countenanced what were developing into undermining and hostile courses of study.

The faith of the early Christians was matter for living, not for speculation; was the channel through which man's aspiration and prayer might ascend, and God's love and power descend. They believed and they lived. But as the world's intellect grew into the new belief, it left the unquestioning simplicity of childhood and an age of interrogation, of mental unrest, of controversy, set in; the sign at once of an intellectual maturity and of a new spiritual impediment. This impediment seems now, however, to be overcome, its force is in the process of being redirected and used for better ends. After five hundred years of active intellectual development opposed to and contending more or less consciously with spiritual things, matters have swung around and are working in the opposite direction. We seek now to use our store-house of knowledge in the investigation of the spiritual world, and we are doing this sympathetically. The love of truth is overcoming pride and self-sufficiency,—an example the Church will

do well to emulate. But in the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries the Church had already become a political organ in essence and in aim, and was left with a mere empty shell of religious truth, to which honest and keen observers of life soon opposed philosophic truth.

With the Reformation came the incentive and opportunity for a new freedom; men ceased to be exclusively Catholics and became *men,* humanists. The Catholic prejudice gradually disappeared from science and philosophy; and when the revolutionary conception of the world in its true relation to other heavenly bodies was established, a door was opened to the "new" philosophy, which based itself almost entirely on natural science. For despite the persecutions of the Church, natural law, long buried under superstition and intellectual bias, reasserted its claim to the world's attention; and bold innovators appeared to champion the cause of common sense and truth. Bruno, by his death in 1600, called the attention of the whole western world to the new philosophy; while at about the same time Francis Bacon (1561-1626) first conceived a new necessity, arising out of the undigested mass of fact gradually accumulating throughout all the branches of knowledge, namely, that of beginning again the whole labor of the mind and of creating what we now know as "science" upon an absolutely new basis (*instauratio magna*). Ancient philosophers were superficial observers, their knowledge was shot through with prejudice. Bacon's brilliant idea was that we must learn to make allowance for our whims, our prejudices, our "idols," and not project these personal equations into nature. Therefore to Bacon we owe the conception of what has since become the great body or system of science, whose compelling force and saving spiritual graces have been its strict adherence to and love for truth, exactitude in detail, and accuracy of statement.

Beginning with Réné Descartes, born 1596, science worked with extreme rapidity under its new régime, growing in precision and sureness, advancing further and further within the realm of matter, and ignoring or openly hostile to the only religion it knew as such, that formulated by the Church of Rome. Descartes was primarily a mathematician, and his philosophy simply aimed at being a generalization of mathematics. He followed with delight the clear, concise, demonstrations of geometry, and exclaimed "I was surprised that upon foundations so solid and stable no loftier structure had been raised." Each subsequent philosopher, thrilled by this general appeal to the imagination, contemplated the possibility of making of philosophy an *exact* science, and of constructing a complete and all-satisfying metaphysics upon a flawless chain of reasoning logically deduced from unimpeachable facts.

In the early days when the new science was but breaking ground with the world of nature, the scientist and philosopher were one. Gradually as the mass of facts increased, as the various branches of

research became more highly specialized, the philosopher became less the active investigator and more the mind that surveyed the accumulated fruit of another's work, weighing its general evidence, following its leads, and obtaining if possible some hint of the ever-receding goal beyond. To be a philosopher today requires the most exacting study and the assimilation of a vast amount of fact and theory of all kinds in the scientific field.

This has had its effect. The early disciples of the Cartesian school, and notably Leibnitz, were purely materialistic; and the axioms from which they deduced their systems were all planted firmly in the world of matter about them, which they were observing, and which almost completely formed the limit of their horizon. Just as the conclusions of geometry inevitably follow from its axioms, so the moral and physical facts which these philosophers considered, followed with absolute necessity from the nature of things expressed by their definitions; and they no more inquired into final causes than the geometer asks to what end the three angles of any given triangle are equal to two right angles. The rigorous methods of proof, the completeness, precision, and certainty which characterize mathematics, these men endeavored to transfer to philosophy. Spinoza and Hobbes, though not to so great a degree proficient in exact science, still strove, with good success in this respect, to follow their example. Locke, from his early studies in medicine, inclined rather to follow the inductive method, and he aimed at completeness through a comprehensive examination of all phenomena. Physical discovery had made vast progress, and the triumphant anticipations of Bacon had begun to be realized.

When, however, a later generation of philosophers grew up, surrounded by the new tradition, and face to face with the problem, not of ascertaining facts but of explaining and divining their higher signification, it naturally turned more to the causes back of natural phenomena than to the rationalization of scientific data and circumstances; seeking to penetrate to the life-giving consciousness lying within and evidenced alike in the cosmos and in ourselves. But leaving out of all account the spiritual origin of man and of the world, and imperiously designating religious or spiritual experience as hysteria, emotion, and extravagant sentiment, these philosophers doomed themselves to a fruitless search, to a quest ending, after much labor and the accumulation of many crusts of thought, exactly where it started. Now, we find science pushing its way through matter until forced to recognize a spiritual world. First it believed in a complex auto-mechanism, started by God or without any beginning. This theory, though perhaps still held by some, has been superseded by a belief in evolution, in growth; not a mere mechanism, but an organism, of which we are component parts, we functioning in it much as the live cells function more or less independently in our own bodies.

Philosophy has followed a parallel cycle of development. Having explored with some completeness the dark and circuitous passages of the mind, and having become satisfied that these regions are limited and ineffectual if held to be the end in themselves in the search for a living truth, the moderns, such as Prof. James, the Pragmatist, Eucken, and pre-eminently Bergson, are turning away from the solely materialistic and intellectual; are approaching the subject from a broader point of view; are introducing an element of higher things, a standard of the highest and best practicability, of duty, and of a regenerating will. These leaders can fairly be said to represent the next necessary step in the philosophical sequence. With feet firmly planted on or *in* the earth, they are nevertheless raising their heads into the air, and directing their gaze upwards. Of Bergson we might say that he is doing this consciously, because he so skillfully lays his foundations on the conceptions and prejudices of his contemporary philosophers and on the latest demonstrations of the many sciences, without, however, in the least being diverted from the goal he sees beyond their limited insight and imperfect conclusions. As a large part of Bergson's originality and flexibility of mind is displayed in the keen way he has outflanked the great modern systems, we must make at least a cursory examination of these systems themselves before commenting in detail on the work of our philosopher.

VI.

The thought of the last three hundred years may be divided roughly into three main classes, calculated to include the leading theories of all the great thinkers. These three are: (1) Those who postulated the reality of the material world and attempted, on this unproved and unprovable foundation, to demonstrate the ideal which it seemed to indicate,—the realists; (2) those who followed a hopeless but strictly logical scepticism, and (3) those who wove a theory, beautiful in itself, which attempted to explain the world as we find it, but which failed to bridge the obvious contradictions between even the best of their theories and real life,—the idealists.

The basic principle of all these systems was the I, the Ego, the self-conscious subject that says *I am.* Following this comes every degree of disagreement as to what else *is,* for to this conscious self come experiences, come messages, impulses, feelings. The tactile nerves are stimulated, we say we touch; the optic nerve receives vibrations, we say we see, and so forth. Whence come these experiences, what brings them about, what do they mean, why are they here? Philosophy has been faced with these questions for centuries; it has set itself the task of answering them because it has believed that back of them lay the cause of the Universe, in other words, that

they are the most immediate conceivable expression of the Universe. The first answer is, of course, that an external world actually exists, and that all the necessary proof is provided by the "evidence of the senses." From the messages received through these senses, which *nolens volens* pour in upon the self, it constructs the "real and solid world" of normal men. Further, these impressions once received, the self, "imprisoned in the body like an oyster in its shell" as Plato expresses it, sorts, accepts, rejects, or combines them; producing from them an idea, or technically a concept, which *is* the external world. "Reality consists in impressions and ideas" says Hume. With naïve simplicity we calmly attribute to this external world that which our own sensations convey to us; the sky *is* blue, water *is* wet, roses *are* red. The conscious self, then, in measure apart from the external world, receives these messages through its only channel of communication, dependent on its instruments for proof of the external world or any knowledge about the reality and nature of every external object. Our senses being inadequate in both accuracy and clearness, there are obviously certain aspects of the world which we can never know, even with the most perfect mechanical help of telescopes and microscopes.

This point of view gives rise to many questions. How can this seemingly real external universe be *the* external world? Is it not merely the self's projected picture of it, not a scientific fact? Suppose that our senses, or channels of communication, happened to act on entirely different planes, in an entirely different way? Would not, then, this present picture that we see be meaningless, purely arbitrary, only an approximation of the truth? Could any single message through the sense, however perfect *as such,* be more than partially relevant to this supposed reality at the other end? The conclusions of the latest scientists and philosophers alike is that no human senses, as we know them, could ever be adequate to the whole, could ever apprehend all that the universe contains.

Thus the sphere of our possible intellectual knowledge is conditioned by the limits of our bodies, our brains, our very character and temperament. Bacon's *idola* could not ultimately be avoided. And on this basis not the visual limits of the earth, but "the external termini of our own sensory nerves" are the furthest boundary we can reach in our exploration outside our selves.

These general philosophic considerations formed the starting point for nearly all the different systems; various orders of minds ranged themselves under what have been handed down to us as the great classic theories, the traditional schools of modern philosophy. In them we see in crystallized form the best that the human intellect, *left to itself,* has been able to achieve; and it is the one redeeming feature of a study of these achievements that a very little

of the leaven of spiritual insight and appreciation can use these otherwise sterile conceptions to great advantage in the living of daily life.

I. The naturalists, or realists, maintain the most obvious and most generally accepted explanation of the world, that of the everyday man and of physical science, namely, that the world about us is the real world, though our interchange with it is inaccurate and inadequate. Approximately at any rate, what seems to be there, is there; our sense impressions are the only valid test of knowledge, and the latter is but the tabulation and classification of exact observation. Locke, Hobbes, Preistley, and their schools, started with this hypothesis; Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibnitz each held it in some degree to be the only sure approach to the problem of reality. Needless to say, however, science itself has today forced the philosopher away from this system. A stone is not a stone, but innumerable atoms whirling about, each atom in itself a miniature universe with central sun and planets. Taken as a whole they appear as a stone; but what *is* a stone; is there such a thing as *stone* in reality? Man, to be sure, has entered into a covenant for convenience sake, and has agreed that what looks like a stone is a stone. But when psychics and mystics appear claiming the ability to perceive things beyond the range of the normal, man is faced with the necessity of acknowledging that he has by no means used all his faculties when he has exhausted the scope of his five material senses. "Eyes and ears," said Heracleitus, "are bad witnesses to those who have barbarian souls"; a very pointed remark, and peculiarly applicable to the scientific realist. This system, however, though believed in for the sake of practicability, has never met with universal credence, because even the average man will turn illogically to a belief in God if too closely pressed by such an argument; driven behind the veil of seemingly impenetrable matter by an act of pure faith. Only coldly organized intellect, living in an atmosphere of calculation and form, and totally devoid of religious perception, could find satisfaction in such a theory.

II. Philosophical scepticism, the second answer to the question of reality, is hardly an answer, it is an evasion. Confronted with a problem the sceptic replies that it is no problem because there is no answer. Reduced to its barest analysis, he says that what he apprehends through his senses is not the object itself, but the concept *in his mind* formed from his impressions. This only can he perceive, outside nothing is provable; because as far as he knows when that concept has ceased to exist in his mind, the external world ceases too. The realist takes for granted that the world exists; the sceptic will not let this hypothesis pass. The one thing he is sure of, that indubitably exists, is his consciousness, his experience. Every effort made by philosophy to search in other fields is merely multiplying conceptions in the brain. Logically carried out (and this system has the merit of being consistently logical) our fellow men are non-

existent except within the individual consciousness, the only place that a strict scepticism will concede that anything exists. And further, the mind which conceives consciousness exists itself only in our conception of it; that is, we know nothing about it; and man is left a "conscious Something in the midst, so far as he knows, of Nothing: with no resources save the exploring of his own consciousness."

Perhaps the greatest fault with this system is that it leads nowhere and answers nothing. Even the most morbid sceptic has to acknowledge the existence of his own consciousness for the moment, but he has suggested nothing as to how that came to be, and in addition has arrived at the startling conclusion that any solution is impossible or any real knowledge unattainable. Hence the sceptic, intellectually speaking, always appears to me to be lacking in manhood. If his efforts in one direction have led nowhere, he should begin again, but above all things he should not confess to failure. This is what the sceptic does; he is a self-confessed failure.

III. Idealism takes its stand upon the theory that the mind is the center of reality, that thought can transcend matter. In doing this it advances a step beyond materialism pure and simple; it has vague inklings of a finer, immaterial, spiritual beyond; but it has not gone far enough, nor has it been sufficiently thorough even in its own field. Its answer, therefore, is valuable, often useful, but tentative and ultimately dissatisfying. It has failed in essentials, while at the same time leading one towards those essentials, which the other systems do not do; they lead away if they lead anywhere.

The idealist leaves for the time being the material universe with its machine-like construction, and asks us to unhamper ourselves from the mass of ill-assorted and out-of-perspective facts, and to use freely the thinking self which we know ourselves to be. In doing this we see but two things, ourselves as conscious thinking subjects, and the idea with which this subject deals. To the idealist, the universe is really a collection of these ideas; often distorted by the individual thinker in the process of assimilation; because it is obvious that we cannot think all that there is to be thought, nor do we necessarily combine in proper order or valuation such conceptions as we are capable of grasping. Reality is the sum total of all thought, the Mind of God, of which we pick up the fragments; and the world of phenomena which we observe and treat as real, is only the projection or shadow, the manifestation, of the Universal Mind in space and time. Man is himself, then, in the words of Tweedledum, "just part of the dream."

There are four main groups or points of view into which idealism may be divided, representing the leading thought of the great idealists; for it can be seen how easily each individual can work out a theory modified to suit his own special personality. These are: (1) Subjective idealism; laying emphasis on the mental theory achieved

more or less regardless of the objective world; (2) Objective idealism; the reverse of subjective; (3) Transcendental, or the idealism of Kant; and (4) Absolute, or the system of Hegel. One might add today, perhaps, the "Immanental Idealism" of Professor Eucken. The cardinal principle of these variations lies in the assertion of "the priority of the cognitive consciousness,—that being is dependent on the knowing of it." There is a distinction between this and the position of ancient idealism, which believed that a body of truth existed above and beyond the thoughts and opinions of men. "Though wisdom is common, yet the many live as if they had a wisdom of their own," said Heracleitus; which saying probably referred to the Secret Doctrine, but which modern philosophers take as a belief in some ideal field of thought untapped by any human mind or consciousness. Modern idealism arose out of a different necessity from the ancient; it had a different aim and function. Religious belief needed to be defended not from the prejudices and blindness of *unthinking* men, but against the claim of science to have alienated the world from the faith and beliefs of men. The world of nature, conceived by the religion of the church to be the handiwork of God, the stage for man's moral drama, threatened in the hands of the scientists to overthrow both God and man. A new philosophy must redeem nature from mechanism, and restore a spiritual center. This idealism attempted to do; which accounts for its appeal to human intuitions, its stimulating power, and its wide influence.

But idealism, as we have said, is incomplete in that it takes little account of living while dreaming and theorizing about life. It has this to be said in its favour;—that it has freed itself from mere concrete facts of sense perception, and has sought light and guidance in the beliefs and concepts which are acknowledged by the generality of men to exist only on the mental plane. It appeals to those states of consciousness to which a man rises in moments of crisis, and which he looks back upon as the most real experiences of his life. Love, religion, patriotism, altruism of all degrees; these belong to the ideal world. Man, dimly realizing his kinship with such qualities, and thus unconsciously claiming his essential divinity, has through all time reverenced them in his heart of hearts. But when the idealist is asked how man can become that which he is not but longs to be, how express in himself the sublime vision of better and higher things, there is no answer. His dream is "a diagram of the heavens, not a ladder to the stars." And the reason is that idealism thinks all these things and only thinks them. It locates the soul of man in the head and not in the heart; which means that though its premises are reasonable, and their application honest, often daring, and even illuminating when directed on the objective world, still it is stultified by its exclusive intellectualism, it depends solely on the industry of the brain rather than on the piercing vision of the heart. Idealism

is a valuable contribution to human thought, and in so far as true, it awakens a dim perception and atmosphere of higher things; but it does not and can not carry man up to the new and more real life that it describes.

VII

These three representative systems of thought, then, lead—nowhere; they have failed in their quest. But they have not failed in utility. Idealism made an appeal to a side of man that material science could scorn for a time but not ignore for long; and as the latter's explorations have forced it to the borderland of the unseen world, have widened its horizon and point of view, a reconciliation became inevitable. Philosophical and religious speculation found in the objective universe no longer an opponent to its theories and intuitions, but, if properly understood, a most marvellous and inspiring illustration of the very principles it taught. Philosophy became more truly scientific; science became more truly philosophical; and both acquired a new tolerance for religion. This has been the development of the last thirty years.

A new philosophy has sprung out of this synthesis, expressive to an unusual degree of the spirit of the age, of the conviction of the people. It seems almost as if the traditional schools had now fulfilled the term of their usefulness and would be left with the passing generation, so radical is the growth and change of viewpoint. This philosophy is called Vitalism; in principle old as the history of thought, in application peculiar to the genius of our time. The feature of utmost significance is that, unconsciously to itself, it is modifying the world's attitude not only towards philosophy, but towards science, art, morality, religion, and practical life. Professor James struck the first decisive note in his Pragmatism; Driesch and other biologists have discovered it in the sphere of organic life; Ramsay, Lodge, and Madame Curie in physics; Eucken in his new idealism; and Bergson in the intellectual and metaphysical fields. Bergson, be it added, has gone further than this, he has transcended the purely intellectual plane, and has entered on the more dynamic one of creative will and intuition, which lacks a distinguishing adjective as yet in this language, but which is essentially not in the same category with the mental efforts of his contemporaries. In this very difference he has succeeded in most truly expressing the new awakening which everywhere is becoming manifest. Popular thought today is undergoing an internal revolution, and under an intimate impulse from within is aspiring and groping towards a higher life and fuller realization of its vision. It is the task of the modern philosopher no longer to isolate himself and attempt to evolve a complete religious and philosophical system, but rather to study the signs and tendencies of the great new movement, to catch

a glimpse of its true direction, and to voice its aim and ideal. Leaders such as James, Eucken, and Bergson have come to realize more or less clearly that this movement is at its foundation religious: it is a turning of the hearts of men away from modern heathenism with its worship of fallen human nature, its deification of accumulated wealth, its pride in self-reliance, independence, and luxury; it is a return to the living, struggling reality within.

The cardinal principle of Vitalism is that of a Life, spontaneous, exuberant, above all things free and creative. A fixed mechanistic law of cause and effect put into operation once and for all is as absurd as to suppose that the laws governing a growing infant can be static, can apply exactly to a mature man. We are alive and grow —everything lives and grows; and living experience alone is to be observed and studied. The Vitalist, whether his field be biology, psychology, or ethics, is seeking and finding an instinct of initiative and spontaneity, which cannot be calculated and confined within the rigid processes of a dialectic. Nature, though conditioned by the matter with which she works, nevertheless causes this to evolve, grow, and improve; expressing more completely and more easily her own spiritual ideal. In this way Vitalism is the exact reverse of materialism; for the universe is an expression of life, not life an expression or by-product of the universe.

We have now in a new dress the ancient conception of Heracleitus, whose Energizing Fire, "the symbol for a free and life-giving Spirit of Becoming" could be incorporated verbatim by a modern author. Bergson, acknowledging his debt along with other vitalists, is the one from amongst all the modern school who sees most clearly the hidden suggestions and meanings of the wise Greek philosopher, and can apply them with added insight and ability to the tendencies of the present moment. It is because Bergson has so thorough a knowledge of his subject, has so marked an ability to grasp at essentials, and has himself so genuine an intuition of the reality of the spiritual world, that he is able to pioneer the way and construct for his day a philosophy which should long out-live him.

This philosophy, with its relation to the past and its bearing on the awakening present, we shall now attempt to consider.

JOHN BLAKE, JR.

(To be continued)

WHY I JOINED THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

I THINK, as a rule, we do not appreciate the real difficulties involved in a clear and definite statement, of why we do a certain thing. The reason generally exists in a half-formulated state in the mind of the doer, and he is satisfied with that: satisfied, at least to make a beginning of doing something. It seems most fortunate that it is not absolutely necessary that one must wait for a logical reason, clearly formulated before acting, but can feel justified in acting, as we say, by intuition, or, as some state, by a direct guidance of something that cannot be analyzed, but seems to warrant the action.

One is often in danger of characterizing present conditions, as an exception to all that have preceded, feeling that there are especial unprecedented movements in process of development. Considered from the standpoint of history, this is an erroneous conception, because there we have witness to the fact of cycles, and the passing through very similar stages at certain stated times. But if one may be allowed to express oneself in terms of the first idea:—I think today, more than ever, people are seeking for truth, and are never satisfied until, what they consider a semblance of it, or, at least, an approximation to it, has been attained. The existence of so many "isms" bears witness to the fact of this seeking, while their very presence is, also, a testimony to their failure as adequate expressions of truth. In view of the fact that there is such an universal demand for truth, it is quite logical to believe that somewhere that truth is available. This must be so, because this "seeking consciousness" postulates its ultimate satisfaction. The truth one hopes to attain may be generally characterized as an adequate working hypothesis for life; a scheme of life that is comprehensive enough to indicate, at least, a gradual development toward the goal for which one is striving.

I have read, with a great deal of interest, the letters that have appeared in this column of the QUARTERLY, and I have been especially impressed with the significant fact, that many of those who have written, have, at some time in their experience, been convinced that this truth or scheme of life was adequately provided for in the Church *, and then at a later period, have discovered that the Church was entirely inadequate to satisfy their longing: Then they have left, and, like Alexander, sought new worlds to conquer. After a little the Theosophical Society has been found, which is characterized in many of the letters as so different from the Church, and capable, in such an admirable

* In using the expression "The Church" in this letter, I have reference to the Protestant Episcopal Church.

way, of filling that void, for which the Church seemed so utterly inefficient. I mention these letters because they have contained so much that has been my own experience. I have been for some time, and am at present, very closely associated with the Church, and I should certainly be the last one to say that, as she appears today, she is fulfilling her function, as a guide to a satisfactory scheme of living, or should be considered as an exclusive repository for all *truth*. I, too, have seen the mechanical ecclesiasticism, the cold formality, and the much discussed dogma, that seems to loom up as such a formidable impediment to the attainment of a solution to that "nameless longing."

While I am not engaged in writing an apologetic for the Church, I think it is necessary in view of the fact that the Church has occupied a place of such prominence, in the experience of many of us, to go a step further into the subject and see if we are justified in holding to only one opinion in regard to the Church and her work. I think when one has arrived at the stage of seeing only the cold formal externals, and the impossibilities of the Church, that there is a total misunderstanding of that Church and what she really stands for. There has been a vision only of the *Man-Made* Church; and the *Church Potential,* what she was in her inception, and I firmly believe is destined yet to be, has been obscured by the intervention of our own ideas and our own lack of vision. The trouble is not with the Church, but with the people in the Church of today. We have built an organization that appeals to men; that caters to our own individual interests, and we have forgotten that such a scheme is not in keeping with the will of the Master. The true conception of Christ's Church is the complete and all comprehending truth and good, and He cannot be added to as a sort of supplement to a thing that exists apart from Him; He cannot be used as a sort of *deus ex machina* to be introduced into our drama and withdrawn at will. If we are acting throughout in obedience to our liking and preference we may not introduce the name of the Master, in order to gain a sanction for our selfish procedure; we may not choose what we consider the proper setting for ourselves and a solution to *our* problems only, and expect that that is a fair representation to the Church. As in our lives, so in the Church, Christ must be everything—all in all. If the Church has been perverted in her purpose; in the purpose of her Founder, it is the result of our own labour; we have what we have worked for. But that does not condemn the Church. It seems to me that her very existence to-day, after all these centuries of turmoil and strife, is a living testimony to her purpose, and that she will attain those heights that are hers, and for which the Master fashioned her in the beginning, and endowed her with all capacities of subsequent development, and ultimately she will work in accordance with His will and the fulfillment of His divine plan.

I have dwelt somewhat at length upon the Church, and the treatment may appear quite foreign to any reason of "why I joined," but on

the contrary it has a direct bearing upon the relations with the Theosophical Society, because I have been able to see the Church as she really is, and Theosophy has taught me to do that. I feel that it is the Theosophical aspect of the Church that shows her in her true colors—as the "Church Militant," and one day will designate her as the Church Victorious. For many years the usual discouraging view of the Church was the only one I could see, and I felt that there must be something beyond; something that must be capable of satisfying a longing for a closer communion with the Master. However, although very discontented with the Church, I felt intuitively that it was my place. I could not leave; could not entirely lose the Vision that occasionally had been mine, and so I went on leading a sort of existence of contraries, feeling underneath it all that the Master I trusted would make my pathway clear.

It is unnecessary to go into detail of how I found the T. S., and came into contact with Theosophy. God moves in a mysterious way, and I am possibly old fashioned enough in the eyes of modern thought, to believe that it was the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit; a direct answer to the earnest prayer to know more of the Master and His will for me. The word "Theosophy" suggests the key note of what I had been looking for—knowledge of divine things—of the Master. St. Augustine aptly explains this longing in the thought that all souls belong to the Master and will not be at peace until they find Him. In the Theosophical Society I found a group of people versed in a knowledge of the Master and of divine things, that far exceeded all the learned theological treatises I had labored through, and the burdensome lectures that I had often groaned under. Here was a seeking and a growing in wisdom of the Master and His will, and the predominating characteristic was the fact of knowing the doctrine and teaching of the Master by living it. I learned from Theosophy that we progress in knowledge in proportion as with real humility and the getting rid of self and our selfish desires, we enter more fully into the life of the Master—and, that the great truths we are seeking and the goal of all our striving is to be found in unity with the living person of the Master. This was the solution to the great problem, and here a scheme of life, so wonderful in its simplicity that all who would, could understand; so pregnant with meaning that it must satisfy the most exacting, and so universal in its application that it could appeal to all, peasant and prince alike could glory in its priceless truths.

Here, then, seemed an apparent difficulty, after finding so much that was unsatisfactory in the Church and that seemed so inadequate, I found a group of people—a society— living the life that I had longed to live, and offering a better solution to the problems of life than I had ever known. What should I do, leave the Church and her apparent failures? I could not consistently do that, because I saw in the Theosophical Society the real life of the Church being lived; the life that the Master

intended for her. Theosophy does not destroy the Church and her doctrines, but lays the foundation for a correct interpretation of the Church; it offers great opportunity to those of us who have appreciated the lack of the real in the Church, to go back with the new light to that Church, not in order to allow it to become again a substitute for the Church of Jesus Christ, but in order to gather it up in that life of the Master, in which in this wonderful experience we may learn to live. The Church which we may now see is a Church conceived as inherently *spiritual* in its origin and meaning, and there, with our new interpretation, we can find and know Him in whom exist all treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Theosophy transfigures that discouraging inadequate aspect of the Church, and puts us in a true relation to her true conception. The Church and Theosophy are not antagonistic; it is not necessary to break with the one in order to be with the other. They seem, to me, to be supplementary, co-essential and co-existent.

I warned my readers in the beginning of the difficulty involved in a statement of a "why," and this rather weak expression of "why I joined," I am sure bears witness to my statement. I feel that the *why* is a growing and becoming, and still in the future it is a sort of an *eternal* why—never to be fully realized until we all shall have *become* Theosophists and:—"No longer exiles but victors shall knock at the immortal doors."

JUSTIN CREIGHTON.

"Look for the disciple, not among those who have the fewest imperfections, but among those who have the greatest courage."

EARLY ENGLISH MYSTICS

V

JOHN SCOTUS ERIGENA AND ST. DIONYSIUS

"We owe a great debt of gratitude to Erigena, not only as a fearless and stimulating thinker, but also as the philosopher who has done more than anyone else to give expression to the cosmic significance of Christ's Person."

—The Bishop of Bloemfontein in *Ara Coeli.*

"The grandly conceived system of Erigena stands by itself in the 9th century like the product of another age. It is the only complete and independent system between the decline of ancient thought and the system of Aquinas, if indeed we ought not to go further, to modern times, to find a parallel." —*Enclyc. Brit.*

IN the second volume of Hakluyt's book of *Voyages* there is a romantic account of the journey made in the ninth century by John Erigena to Athens and to the oracle of the sun that had been erected by Æsculapius. Hakluyt narrates that Erigena left England, during the reign of King Alfred, as the Danes had made it an unfit abode for a scholar. In the East, he became master of the Chaldee and Arabic languages as well as of Greek. He returned by the way of Italy and France. His erudition won him the favor of the French King. And he spent the rest of his days in France.

Hakluyt's narrative has the authority of romance only. But an atmosphere of mystery spreads around Erigena through that casual mention of the shrine of Æsculapius. Vergil was accounted a wizard during the Middle Ages. Erigena's position is something like Vergil's. His philosophic mind set him aloof from saints and scholars as a man who had intercourse with sources of knowledge unknown to men in general. Yet the springs of knowledge that welled fresh and deep water to him, he discovered through the perfection of his devotion. He is a philosopher and metaphysician as well as a mystic. It was granted him to see, below the relation of Christ with each individual, the relation of the Eternal λογος to the manifested universe.

There is very little known of Erigena's personal history. [He must not be confused with Duns Scotus of the 13th century]. The two adjectives appended to his proper name, *John,* give his nationality and place of birth. Erigena is derived from Erin. This famous scholar came from the race of the Irish Scotch, and was born in Ireland. Just how *Erigena* has come to be used for his name we do not know. He was in France about 847, Master of the Palace School in the reign of Charles the Bald, grandson of the great Emperor. Almost nothing more of his life is known except in connection with his writings.

Erigena's work is of the very greatest value. Through his Latin translation he made accessible to the Christian monks and scholars of Europe the inaccessible Greek writings of St. Dionysius. The writings of St. Dionysius represent, we believe, a successful effort of the Western Avatar to infuse into the hard materialism of Jewish Christianity the spiritual philosophy of the Great Lodge.

From writings that have from time to time appeared in the QUARTERLY, it is easy to form a conjecture that the Greek nation was being prepared for the advent of the Western Avatar. When the moral failure of the Greeks checked the original design, there was a deviation from the plan, and the Jewish nation was used as the birthplace of Western Religion. By that change Greek philosophy, which represents part of the Lodge's effort of preparation, was balked of its culmination. And the zealous but unspeculative Jewish mind had no apprehension of the mighty and mysterious events that were happening. It is possible to believe that a good part of the Master's effort, after the "Ascension," was to bring together the two elements represented by Greece and Judea—to fuse the deep philosophy and lofty metaphysics of the Hellene with the zeal and outer righteousness of the Jew.

The work of St. Paul may be a part of the Master's effort. The familiar ideas of Platonic philosophy recur through St. Paul's letters. And aside from St. Paul's immediate instruction by the Master, there are to be remembered his years of study with Gamaliel, and Gamaliel's possible connection with Philo, the Jew, who at Alexandria was interpreting the doctrine of the Hebrew *Genesis,* etc., by light derived from Greek philosophy.

If one proceed from such a hypothesis as the Master's effort to fuse Greek philosophy with Jewish zeal, the work of the Neo-Platonists might appear a movement inspired and directed by Him. That hypothesis would settle in a moment the problems that have so long perplexed Catholic and Protestant and agnostic minds in regard to the writings of St. Dionysius. For as the writings of Dionysius embody the old teachings of Vedanta philosophy, those who are eager to recognize the Master as the Unseen Power behind history would easily believe that He and the Lodge, in their supreme consideration for the fate of humanity, had once more, through that old saint, breathed the breath of Life into the Death House of our world.

St. Dionysius is the enigmatical person commonly called the Pseudo (false) Areopagite. While some scholars of extreme temperament denounce his writings as forgeries, the conservative opinions of both Catholic and Protestant judge them authentic, though no light can be thrown upon the personality of the author. As both the Eastern (Greek Orthodox) and Roman Catholic Churches have canonized the unknown author, the official attitude toward the

writings is clear. Their history is briefly as follows. The writings of St. Dionysius cannot be traced back beyond the 4th century. It is believed by conservatives they were composed in the 4th or the 5th century. But they purport to be the work of the man named Dionysius (the Areopagite) who was converted to Christianity during St. Paul's visit to Athens. In the writings the author states that he had seen the holy mother Mary. And besides the formal writings there are letters addressed to Timothy, to Polycarp and to St. John himself. What end other than forgery would lead a 4th or 5th century theologian to palm off his own writings under an illustrious Athenian name?

The writings themselves, and their influence upon the Christian Church lead me to regard them as an inspiration from the Master himself to some unknown faithful disciple whom we will call—as the Church does—St. Dionysius. The chief teaching of the several treatises is, briefly, the old Vedanta doctrine of the Transcendence of the One, called by Dionysius, God, and the possibility for man of union with the One. To state with brevity the influence of the Dionysian treatises upon the Christian Church I will quote a contemporary Roman Catholic priest; the Reverend Father Sharpe (not a Modernist) says "their echoes are heard in every mystical writer since their appearance." We have often been told that it is the mystics who have kept the Christian Church alive. Shall we doubt that the Treatises whose echoes resound in every mystical writer had connection with the great Founder of the Faith?

The writings of Dionysius reached France in the 8th century in a Greek manuscript presented by Pope Paul to King Pepin. But their influence was quiescent for a century. No one but an Irishman could read Greek, it was declared, and, in the 8th century, we have seen Alcuin's endeavor to exclude the Irish from France. In 827 a second Greek manuscript containing the works was presented to Louis (son of Charlemagne). This manuscript aroused great enthusiasm in King Louis's Chaplain, Hilduin, Abbot of the Monastery of St. Denis. Hilduin maintained, on the basis of some legend, that St. Paul's convert, Dionysius, had left Athens and had come to France, the first Christian missionary in the West, the national protector, St. Denis. Hilduin further maintained that the bones of this St. Dionysius or Denis were at that moment reposing in the Monastery. He at once set about translating the works of the French Athenian Saint! Still little impression seems to have been made. Twenty years later, 847, is the first mention of Erigena's presence in France. Erigena's patron, King Charles the Bald, directed him to translate the Greek manuscript. Erigena's translation made Dionysius current in European thought.

Erigena's original compositions show why his translation of Dionysius was so successful. There was affinity of mind and spirit.

In all his writing, Erigena quotes his favorite teacher over and over again. And the teachings of Dionysius appear repeated and repeated in Erigena. Yet the repetitions are not those made by a stupid disciple of his teacher's words. Erigena's own works are as truly original as those of St. Dionysius. Erigena too, in devotion, goes back to the great Source of Life, and the fresh waters stream through him. Thus, while one reads Erigena, it is all familiar, but full of interest.

Erigena translated all the works of Dionysius, namely, four treatises and ten letters, and wrote comments on the treatises. The names of the treatises and their contents are very briefly, as follows: I. *The Divine Names.* In this the Transcendence of the One is set forth. Names are applied by way of metaphor to Divinity, for the One exists beyond all names and "pairs of opposites." Because He includes everything and is above everything, it is easier to speak of Him negatively, i. e., by saying what He is not, than affirmatively. II. *The Celestial Hierarchy.* An exposition of the planes of spiritual life. This book is the source of Christian knowledge about the orders of the angels, as they are arranged in Dante's *Paradiso,* for example. III. *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy.* A mystical interpretation of the Sacraments and Offices of the Church. IV. *Mystical Theology;* this explains the way of union with the One.

Erigena's original works are *Comments on the Gospel of St. John, On Predestination,* and *On the Division of Nature.* The last is his greatest. The Dionysian teachings are set forth there, but in an original way, with a wealth of illustration, and proofs furnished by the author's very genuine erudition. The work is in the form of a dialogue between a teacher and his pupil. The teacher unfolds the meaning of obscure texts of Scripture. He goes back to the original languages for the meaning of words, traces them back to their roots, and thus in a masterly manner floods darkness with light. The words of the title are entirely misleading as to the meaning. By "Nature" Erigena meant what philosophers mean—the spiritual world behind the visible. It is no part of Erigena's plan to consider the visible world of matter. For by "Nature" he means that which partakes of the essence of Transcendent Being, the Primordial Essences. The visible world of matter is an accident, as it were, a shadow that will pass away. He considers the Transcendent Being of God in four divisions: First, as the Beginning from which all Nature proceeds, and fourthly, as the End to which all Nature returns. Between the Beginning and the End are, secondly, the Unmanifest Primordial Causes, and, thirdly, the Angels and Man (spiritual) as Effects of the Primordial Causes. In division three, the Teacher explains to his pupil the book of Genesis. Erigena's interpretation makes the events of the Mosaic narrative refer altogether to the spiritual plane —the creation of spiritual man. It should be noted in passing that he

interprets the "Fall" as the seduction of the spiritual nature by the mind. The five books of this great work contain passages of superb eloquence, and others of great devotion. It abounds with references to Dionysius and quotations from him. It quotes frequently from Greek Fathers of the Church, and also from St. Augustine, who seems to Erigena the greatest of the Latins. But Erigena knew that the Latins could give very little help in his arguments. And though he quotes them, Hilary, Ambrose and others, to show that there is usually a mystical core in their works, yet he is quite candid and fair. He admits that the beliefs of the Latins generally were different from those of Origen, Maximus, Gregory Nazianzen and the East.

It is unfortunate that Erigena's belief in the transcendence of Divine Being led him to an undue stress upon one point in the great circumference of Catholic truth. When any single point of the circumference receives more than due attention, a tangental line of heresy is likely to result. St. Dionysius had written of sin as a distortion or perversion of virtue, as virtue in the making. That doctrine is familiar to-day. But one can see that over-emphasis might cause some people to rest content in the sin instead of proceeding to the active process of transformation. Erigena's work *On Predestination* gave the impression that he did not sufficiently consider the gravity of sin. That simple fault brought suspicion upon his other teachings. The indefinite charge "Pantheism" has always been made against him. And his masterpiece, *De Divisione Naturae,* has been condemned. It is nevertheless to be found along with his approved writings in Volume 122 of Migne's *Patrologiae.*

The writings of Erigena and of St. Dionysius are of first importance. They are very readable though not in common circulation. Hence it seems well to conclude this article with certain extracts that will make clearer than any essay could the doctrines of the two men and the nature of their influence.

SPENCER MONTAGUE.

ST. DIONYSIUS: MYSTICAL THEOLOGY

Translated by the Reverend Father Sharpe.*

(*This is a very short treatise dedicated to Timothy. The introduction and three sections are here reprinted.*)

Most exalted Trinity, Divinity above all knowledge, whose goodness passes understanding, who dost guide Christians to divine wisdom†; direct our way to the summit of thy mystical oracles, most incomprehensible, most lucid and most exalted, where the simple and pure and unchangeable mysteries of theology are revealed in

* In *Mysticism: Its True Nature and Value.* Published by Herder, St. Louis.
† The word in the original, and in Erigena's translation is "Theosophy."

the darkness, clearer than light, of that silence in which secret things are hidden; a darkness that shines brighter than light, that invisibly and intangibly illuminates with splendours of inconceivable beauty the soul that sees not. Let this be my prayer; but do thou, dear Timothy, diligently giving thyself to mystical contemplation, leave the senses, and the operations of the intellect, and all things sensible and intelligible, and things that are and things that are not, that thou mayest rise as may be lawful for thee, by ways above knowledge to union with Him who is above all knowledge and all being; that in freedom and abandonment of all, thou mayest be borne, through pure, entire and absolute abstraction of thyself from all things, into the supernatural radiance of the divine darkness.

But see that none of the uninitiated hear these things. I mean those who cleave to created things, and suppose not that anything exists after a supernatural manner, above nature; but imagine that by their own natural understanding they know Him who has made darkness His secret place. But if the principles of the divine mysteries are above the understanding of these, what is to be said of those yet more untaught, who call the absolute First Cause of all after the lowest things in nature, and say that He is in no way above the images which they fashion after various designs; of whom they should declare and affirm that in Him as the cause of all, is all that may be predicated positively of created things; while yet they might with more propriety deny these predicates to Him, as being far above all; holding that here denial is not contrary to affirmation, since He is infinitely above all notion of deprivation, and above all affirmation and negation.

Thus the divine Bartholomew says that Theology is both much and very little, and that the Gospel is great and ample, and yet short. His sublime meaning is, I think, that the beneficent cause of all things says much, and says little, and is altogether silent, as having neither (human) speech nor (human) understanding, since He is essentially above all created things, and manifests Himself unveiled, and as He truly is to those only who pass beyond all that is either pure or impure, who rise above the highest height of holy things, who abandon all divine light and sound and heavenly speech, and are absorbed into that darkness where, as the Scripture says, He truly is, who is beyond all things.

It is not without a deeper meaning that the divine Moses was commanded first to be himself purified, and then to separate himself from the impure; and after all this purification heard many voices of trumpets, and saw many lights shedding manifold pure beams: and that he was thereafter separated from the multitude and together with the elect priests came to the height of the divine ascents. Yet thereby he did not attain to the presence of God Himself; he saw not Him (for He cannot be looked upon), but the place where He was.

This, I think, signifies that the divinest and most exalted of visible and invisible things are, as it were, suggestions of those that are immediately beneath Him who is above all, and whereby is indicated the presence of Him who passes all understanding, and stands, as it were, in that spot which is conceived by the intellect as the highest of His holy places; then that they who are free and untrammelled by all that is seen and all that sees enter into the true mystical darkness of ignorance, whence all perception of understanding is excluded, and abide in that which is intangible and invisible, being wholly absorbed in Him who is beyond all things, and belong no more to any, neither to themselves nor to another, but are united in their higher part to Him who is wholly unintelligible, and whom, by understanding nothing, they understand after a manner above all intelligence.

We desire to abide in this most luminous darkness, and without sight or knowledge, to see that which is above sight or knowledge, by means of that very fact that we see not and know not. For this is truly to see and know, to praise Him who is above nature, in a manner above nature, by the abstraction of all that is natural; as those who would make a statue out of the natural stone abstract all the surrounding material which hinders the sight of the shape lying concealed within, and by that abstraction alone reveal its hidden beauty. It is needful, as I think, to make this abstraction in a manner precisely opposite to that in which we deal with the Divine attributes; for we add them together, beginning with the primary ones, and passing from them to the secondary, and so to the last; but here we ascend from the last to the first, abstracting all, so as to unveil and know that which is beyond knowledge, and which in all things is hidden from our sight by that which can be known, and so to behold that supernatural darkness which is hidden by all such light as is in created things.

We say that the Cause of all things, who is Himself above all things, is neither without being nor without life, nor without reason nor without intelligence; nor is He a body; nor has He form or shape, or quality or quantity or mass; He is not localised or visible or tangible; He is neither sensitive nor sensible; He is subject to no disorder or disturbance arising from material passion; He is not subject to failure of power, or to the accidents of sensible things; He needs no light; He suffers no change or corruption or division, or privation or flux; and He neither has nor is anything else that belongs to the senses.

Again, ascending, we say that He is neither soul nor intellect; nor has He imagination, nor opinion nor reason; He has neither speech nor understanding, and is neither declared nor understood; He is neither number nor order, nor greatness nor smallness, nor equality nor likeness nor unlikeness; He does not stand or move or

rest; He neither has power nor is power; nor is He light, nor does He live, nor is He life; He is neither being nor age nor time; nor is He subject to intellectual contact; He is neither knowledge nor truth, nor royalty nor wisdom; He is neither one nor unity, nor divinity, nor goodness; nor is He spirit, as we understand spirit; He is neither sonship nor fatherhood nor anything else known to us or to any other beings, either of the things that are or the things that are not; nor does anything that is, know Him as He is, nor does He know anything that is as it is; He has neither word nor name nor knowledge; He is neither darkness nor light nor truth nor error; He can neither be affirmed nor denied; nay, though we may affirm or deny the things that are beneath Him, we can neither affirm nor deny Him; for the perfect and sole cause of all is above all affirmation, and that which transcends all is above all subtraction, absolutely separate, and beyond all that is.

LETTER TO DOROTHEUS THE DEACON BY ST. DIONYSIUS

Translated by Father Sharpe

The divine darkness is the inaccessible light in which God is said to dwell. And since He is invisible by reason of the abundant outpouring of supernatural light, it follows that whosoever is counted worthy to know and see God, by the very fact that he neither sees nor knows Him, attains to that which is above sight and knowledge, and at the same time perceives that God is beyond all things both sensible and intelligible, saying with the Prophet, "Thy knowledge is become wonderful to me; it is high, and I cannot reach to it." In like manner, St. Paul, we are told, knew God, when he knew Him to be above all knowledge and understanding; wherefore he says that His ways are unsearchable and His judgments inscrutable, His gifts unspeakable, and His peace passing all understanding; as one who had found Him who is above all things, and whom he had perceived to be above knowledge, and separate from all things, being the Creator of all.

JOHN SCOTUS ERIGENA

Extracts translated by S. M.

Comments on The Gospel of St. John

The voice of the eagle falls upon the ear of the Church. While the physical organ catches the quick passing sound, let the soul draw into itself the meaning of the words as immortal treasure. The sun-sighted bird soars high above the gross air of earth, above the ether, above the limits of the visible universe; then, borne upon the swift

wings of secret science, it beholds, with the piercing eyes of contemplation, the lofty lands that tower above the invisible world. For there is a visible universe, and also an invisible. Within the visible is contained whatever human or angelic intelligence can apprehend. But the invisible universe is hidden deep beyond the range of all perception. It is above these two worlds that the blessed evangelist soars. The mysterious flight of the spirit carries him outside the universe of visible creatures and the universe of invisible essences, and lifts him toward the secret sanctuary of the Most High. There he beholds the incomprehensible Unity of the One which differentiates itself into the Absolute and the Logos, the Father and the Son.

Oh blessed Evangelist! rightly art thou named John! for thy name means *one to whom gifts have been made.* To which of the apostles was such grace given as to thee, first, to pierce into the hidden mystery of the Most High, and then, to make known to the human understanding the secrets which had been there revealed to thee? Is there another who received a like gift as thine, and as rich? Does some one reply "Peter, when he answered his Master's question saying 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God'?" But in that answer Peter seems to me rather a type of faith and of action than of knowledge and meditation. Indeed the two disciples very aptly symbolise those contrasting virtues, faith and knowledge, action and meditation. Thus, one laid his head upon his Master's bosom; what is that but the symbol of meditation? The other often wavered and fell, symbolising inevitable action and reaction. For when a man begins to obey the divine commandments, it is long before he can bring his purpose to a steady level; meanwhile he fluctuates, sailing now on the crest of virtues, and immediately afterwards plunging into the dark troughs of the swinish nature. But with the contemplative Seer it is not so. When the period of purgation is past, and the meditative eye beholds the Face of Truth, then all wavering ends—reaction, rebellion, resistance, all cease.

Other facts in the Gospel narratives sharpen the lines of contrast between Peter and John. Thus both ran to the sepulchre, and though John outstripped Peter, Peter was first to enter. If we read below the surface meaning of the words, we shall understand by "sepulchre" the "Holy Scriptures." In them, as in a granite fortress, the mystery of the Divine and Human natures is guarded. Peter is the first to enter the guarded fortress. Faith precedes knowledge and prepares the way for it. Yet the swifter speed of John clearly represents the quick operation of intuition. Consider again the testimony borne by the two men for the Master. Peter recognized Him as God made man and subject to temporal conditions; he called him "Christ, the Son of the Living God." That was a lofty preception. But John's vision soared higher. He saw Christ

as God born of God before temporal conditions had begun to exist. It is of this truth that John bears testimony when he writes: "In the beginning was the *logos*" (or "In the First Principle existed the *logos*"). I would have no one think that I am making odious comparisons of the Apostles. I am not exalting John above Peter. Is not Peter truly the Prince of the Apostles? I am considering now, not the personal dignity of the Apostles, but the nice distinctions between the lofty qualities which they seem to me to symbolise. So, without personal reference to John or Peter, I can say that I am comparing and contrasting Action and Meditation. Action purges the soul till it is wholly purified. The soul climbs up a ladder of perfection until it arrives at an unchanging constancy of virtue. Thus Meditation is the end of Action. Therefore let me again say that Peter (i. e. the performance of good acts and thoughts) by reason of his right action, saw the Son of God subject, through the mysterious Incarnation, to the limitations of flesh; while John (i. e. the highest form of Meditation, or Contemplation) beheld with wonder the *logos* of Deity existing Independent, Absolute and Infinite within the First Principle from which it is derived—he beheld the Son in the Father. Peter, by divine inspiration, saw the temporal nature and the eternal made one in Christ. John disclosed to our hearts the awful sanctity of Christ's Divine Eternal Being.

Therefore I call John a swift-winged eagle that rests from flight in view of the Awful Presence. He outsoars visible and invisible space, and the furthest stretch of spiritual vision, and, perfect as his Father, enters into the joy of his Father, Whose Love has given him this perfection (*deificatum in Deum intrat deificantem*). St. Paul tells us in his letter that he was carried up to the third heaven; but he was not carried into the "heaven of heavens." He was raised into Paradise, but not above Paradise. John passed through the highest heaven, and rose above the Paradise of Angels. In the third heaven, the sacred Apostle of the Gentiles heard ineffable words which he was not permitted to speak unto men. But John, the contemplator of Love's innermost Truth, entered the Holy Place that lies outside the furthest goal of Heaven, and in that centre and Sacred Heart of Life he heard one single Word; and to him the grace was given to proclaim unto men that Word, by which all angels and men are made. Loyal to his trust he cries out to those who can hear: "In the beginning was the Word."

John was not man, but more than man when he entered into the life of the Secret Essence, the awful mystery of the One Principle in Three Substances. For in no other way can man ascend to God, save by first becoming God. Just as the human eye has no light of its own to perceive color and form but must irradiate its darkness with the solar rays, seeing the light by the light, so the soul of man cannot know the sacred mysteries of spiritual wisdom until it is made

fit to partake of that wisdom and to be made a parcel of it. It is thus that the holy Evangelist was transformed by divine alchemy; he became a partaker of the Divine Nature. By virtue of that transformation he saw God the *logos* existing within God the Absolute, the Son in the Father.

"That was the True Light." Human nature, even sinless, has no power of self-illumination. It is not the "Light of the World," though it can be lighted up by the rays of that Central Sun. For just as the dark atmosphere of earth is made luminous by the light of the sun, so the dark ignorance of the "natural man" is illumined by the Sun of Divine Wisdom. And as the earth, lighted by the sun, reflects light, so human nature, when the rays of Divine Grace fall upon it, appears fairer than it is. Christ himself says to us: "It is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." In these words He teaches us to distinguish between True Light and its reflection. He wishes us ever to listen to Him speaking mysteriously in our hearts and saying: "Give glory to the Father, for it is He who works through you. You do nothing of yourselves. I am glowing in your hearts, the Light of the whole world, not seen by the eye, but by the soul. It is not you who find me out and come to me, but I, in you, bring you to myself. You are to become clear mirrors of the Light that shines eternally above you." St. John would not have us believe that the opinions of human nature are divine intuitions, rays of heavenly light. The Eternal Light shines upon those who, through the second birth, have begun to live in the spiritual world. A new and stricter law is obeyed by these spiritual babes. They turn in aspiration from the old world below them, and bend their endeavor to reach dim heights above. They come out from the dark shadow of death into the light of wisdom and life. They flee from their old mother, the Earth, and turn swift feet to their Father's home in Heaven. They oppose and destroy their desires and vices. It is only upon such aspirants that the True Light shines.

"And the world knew Him not." It is man, the microcosm, that is here meant by the word "world," not the universe. For in man the spiritual and corporeal worlds are united. It is this creature, bound by the chains of sin and blinded by ignorance, that did not recognize its Creator. Man could not perceive the awful splendor of Divinity before the Incarnation; and rejected that splendor when it was veiled in humanity. Man ignored his invisible Lord, and spurned that Lord when He stood face to face on earth. Man refused to follow the Friend who so patiently had followed him, would not listen to His voice, would not accept His deifying Grace, would not receive the exile from Heaven who had come to rescue the waif of earth.

"Born of God." Some have said it seems impossible that mortals should become immortal, that corruption should lose its taint, that

men should become sons of God and pass from the prison of time to the freedom of eternity. But, *"the Word was made flesh."* If we believe the stupendous miracle of the Incarnation, why should we refuse faith to a much less mysterious event? If the Son of God was made Man, why should not the man who opens the door to Him become likewise a son? It was to this end that the λογος descended into the world, in order that through His Humanity, human nature might ascend into heaven. The one only-begotten Son longed to bring a host of foster-children to His Father. The Incarnation was for our benefit, not for His own. He wished to make His Humanity a medium for the transmutation of all human nature to Divine. He descended alone, in order that he might ascend with many. He, a God, made Himself Man, in order that He might make Gods of men.

FROM DE DEVISIONE NATURAE

God created our souls and our bodies simultaneously in Paradise; but those bodies were, as St. Paul calls them, celestial, spiritual, such as they will be after our resurrection. For the swollen, decaying, material bodies in which we are now imprisoned, came upon us not from Nature but from Sin. Therefore, this material body, which is an excrescence upon our Nature due to sin, will fall away, when our Nature shall have been restored in Christ, and established in pristine splendor. For surely that thing cannot be eternal which has fastened upon us as the result of sin. Yet I believe that even this excrescence will not be annihilated, but will be transformed, by the might of Christ, until it becomes like in kind with our nature as first created. For as a mirror is perfected, not by dashing out its flaws, but by transforming them, so is our present condition to be purified.

Man will not be restored to the state from which he fell, but, in Christ, will be exalted above it, and above all celestial being. For sin did its baleful work, yet Divine Compassion is mightier than sin. So that human nature, purified in Christ, will not take its former place among spiritual creatures, but will be lifted up above all creatures into the Godhead itself, and will sit down, with Christ, on the right hand of the Father.

No creature can of its own strength ascend to the abode of God. But as the mind can not understand the mystery of Christ's descent into humanity, neither can it grasp the meaning of man's ascent toward God.

When Christ left the grave, he entered Paradise; yet, at the same time, he spoke familiarly with his disciples, and showed them clearly that Heaven is nothing else than the exalted consciousness of the spiritual nature when it has risen from the tomb of flesh. This Heaven He promised to all who believe in Him. He taught also that at heart there is no difference between Heaven and earth, for Heaven is the heart of earth. The shocks and chances that trouble earth have developed since man's fall; their purpose is not so much to punish man as to give an opportunity for discipline and amendment. Thus Christ redeems earth itself from the blight of man's sin, and shows that Heaven and earth are one home, to which earth is the portal. For it is not unthinkable space that separates Heaven and earth, but the condition of a man's own heart.

Surely no one believes that when Christ talked with His disciples after the Resurrection, He came to them from any spot of earth, or that, when He vanished from their presence, He departed to some other spot. After the Resurrection, not only His Divinity, but even His Human nature had triumphed over the laws of time and place. For Spiritual bodies are not subject to the limitations of earthy matter: they are free from the grossness of the material body. Christ appeared to His disciples in the form in which He had been crucified so that He might foster their faith until their minds should be illuminated by the truth. After a brief period of outer manifestation, He withdrew, to show Himself interiorly, in true spiritual form. When He says: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," He indicates clearly that He will be with His children, not as the unembodied λογος, which indeed forever sustains and enkindles all life, but as the Human Friend, Who unites in His own person man's nature and God's, Who raises man's nature from its place among the dead and transmutes it, making it Divine. Yet the Humanity in which the Master dwells among His children is free from all local and temporal restrictions. Marvellous, unthinkable indeed, is the manner of His present Life! For while He sits in glory at the right hand of His Father, God of God and Light of Light, He also visits those among man who love Him, and shows Himself to them openly or interiorly. And though He is the Mighty Ruler of the universe, yet He ministers in all things to the dire needs of wretched man.

After the Resurrection, when Christ from time to time disappeared from the sight of His disciples, His disappearance was not what we should call a withdrawal to some other place; it was rather

an *indrawal* into the finer substance of His spiritual body. As the disciples' vision had not yet reached the stage of perceiving spiritual matter, He was consequently hid from them.

The whole creation was restored in the person of the only-begotten Son. And what was then done vicariously by Christ, will be enjoyed at the end of the world, by all creatures. For in that Christ wrought His purpose gloriously, He wrought it not for himself, but for all creation. I repeat, not for man, alone, but for all creation, creatures that are above man, like the angels, and also for those below the human plane. In man, both the higher traits of spirits and the lower instincts of animals are joined together. Thus, Christ, in taking upon Himself human nature, took upon Him the angelic and the bestial dispositions. So that the sacrifice of His Incarnation brought no less profit to angels than to sinful men.

Life is a circle whose center is God.

FORBES ROBINSON.

Heaven is the possibility of fresh acts of self-sacrifice.

FORBES ROBINSON.

MAURICE MAETERLINCK AND THEOSOPHY

WE are accustomed to the speculations of M. Maeterlinck in various directions, and in various styles. He is always clear, and always ready to take up some new theme and make it his own; but it must be confessed that in dealing with Theosophy in his recent book, called "La Mort," he seems to have gone rather beyond his depth, and to have confounded the ideas of reincarnation and the transmigration of souls.

Before taking up the questions of the nature and the persistence of the individual consciousness, M. Maeterlinck thinks it would be well to study two interesting solutions of these problems, which if not novel, are at least revivals of the idea of personal immortality. These neo-theosophic and neo-spiritistic theories are the only ones that he thinks worthy of serious discussion. "It cannot be denied," he says, "that of all religious hypothesis, reincarnation is the most plausible, and the one least shocking to our reason. It has the advantage of the support of the most ancient and the most universal religions, those which we have not yet fully comprehended. In fact the whole of Asia, whence comes to us nearly all we know, has always believed and still believes, in the transmigration of souls." Here Maeterlinck quotes Annie Besant, whom he styles "that remarkable apostle of the new Theosophy," as saying —"very justly"—that there is no philosophical doctrine which has back of it so magnificent a past, so charged with intellectuality, as the doctrine of reincarnation, "there is no other, as Max Müller has declared, upon which the greatest philosophers of humanity have been so completely in accord."

All this, says M. Maeterlinck, is perfectly true. But he goes no further, the whole of Theosophy for him, seems to be compressed into that one doctrine; and not content with a philosophy handed down to us from remotest antiquity, a philosophy that he says is so completely satisfying to the greatest minds of all ages, he asks for—what?—for proofs! For proofs! and says that he has vainly sought for a single one among the best writings of our modern Theosophists. He finds them all limited to reiterated and dogmatic affirmations floating in empty space, whither M. Maeterlinck would seem to have sought them.

Several of the earlier chapters of *La Mort* are devoted to the terrors of death, dwelt upon, most of us would think, with quite unnecessary elaboration. Apart from any psychic or spiritistic phenomena, is it not a very frequent occurrence that a gentle indifference steals over the departing spirit, and an absolute absence of desire takes the place of

the frenzied clinging to life which marks the fewer departures. One of the best known physicians in New York told me that only twenty per cent. of the deaths he had witnessed, were other than calm and peaceful —probably indifferent would be the better word. A day will come, M. Maeterlinck is sure, when science will not only assert an opinion, but will act with certainty when there is a question as to the release from suffering in incurable disease; when Life, grown wiser, will silently steal away, at the hour of its own choice, knowing that its hour has come, as calmly as it retires every night, knowing that its daily task is completed. There will not be any reason, physical or metaphysical, why the approach of death should not be as beneficent as the coming of sleep.

We are promised on the other hand, our author says, that in refining our senses, making our bodies more subtle, we, our mind, can live with those we call dead, and with the superior beings that surround us. It is surprising to him that they bring us nothing in the nature of proof. We demand something other than arbitrary theories about "the immortal triad," "the astral body," "Kama-Loka," etc. It is possible, he concedes, that the theosophists are right when they maintain that we are continually surrounded by swarms of living entities, intelligent and innumerable, "and as different from each other as a blade of grass from a tiger, or a tiger from a man," who elbow us unceasing, and through whom we pass without perceiving them." We go from one extreme to the other. "If all religions have united in over-stocking the world of invisible beings, we have, perhaps, too completely *de*-peopled it, and it is very possible that some day we shall find out that the error was not on the side we thought." Let us only remember, he continues, that we are not obliged to prove the statements of positive religions, it is for them to establish their truth. Now there is not one of them that presents us with any proof that a moderate intelligence could accept as irresistible.

And be it said in passing, says M. Maeterlinck, it is always very unfortunate to replace a mystery by a lesser mystery. In the hierarchy of the unknown, humanity always ascends from the lesser to the greater. On the other hand, to descend from the greater to the less, is to return to a primitive barbarism, where man goes so far as to replace the infinite by a fetish or an amulet. The greatness of man is measured by the mysteries he cultivates, or before which he stops short.

"We stand before the abyss," says M. Maeterlinck, "emptied of all the dreams with which our fathers peopled it. They believed they knew what was there, we only know what is not there. While waiting for a scientific certainty to dispel the darkness—for man has a right to hope for what he cannot yet conceive—the only thing that interests us, because we find it within the little circle that our present intelligence traces upon the darkest night, is to know whether the unknown whither we go, is to be welcomed or feared."

Outside of the positive answers given by the churches, four solutions

of this problem appeal to M. Maeterlinck as conceivable: I, total annihilation; II, survival of our present consciousness; III, survival without any kind of consciousness; IV, finally, survival, or rather absorption in the universal consciousness; or with a consciousness which is not the same as that we enjoy in this world, which makes V., *M. le philosophe, ne vous déplaise!* It does not seem to occur to him that total annihilation (I) and survival without any kind of consciousness, (III) are virtually the same thing, and so is absorption in the universal consciousness, (IV). Of a consciousness differing from our own, we are unable to conceive at present, which leaves us with only two theories, I, and IV, and as M. Maeterlinck confesses in his next paragraph that total annihilation is an impossibility, we have nothing left but the universal consciousness, in which our own is swallowed up. A cheerful philosopher found his way out of this dilemma, by asserting that if you were not to be immortal, you would never know it. Of course unless some other condition of consciousness than ours immediately succeeded death, there could be no survival of the personality, and no such thing as immortality, in the ordinary sense of the word.

And so we come round again to the point from which we started, the theosophic ideas of death and re-incarnation, as M. Maeterlinck sees them. He has a passage on the soul or rather the mind, which is very significant. "How can our thought," he says, "remain the same when there is nothing left of that which embodied it? When it has no longer a body, what can it carry into the infinite by which it can recognize itself, an entity who only knew itself thanks to that body? A few souvenirs of a common life? Would these recollections, already beginning to fade in this world, suffice to separate this entity forever from the rest of the universe, in unbounded space, and unlimited time? But it may be said, in our 'I' lies hidden a superior being to the one we know. It is probable, even certain; but how will the 'I' we know, and whose destiny alone concerns us, recognize all these things and this superior being which it has never known? If I am told that this stranger is myself I should like to believe it, but that which in this world felt and measured my joys and sorrows, and gave birth to the few thoughts and memories that remain to me, was it this unknown and invisible being which existed in me without my suspecting it, as I probably lived in it without its troubling itself about a presence that brought it nothing but the miserable memory of a thing which is no more?" It reminds one of Aldrich's two ghosts that meet in "desolate wind-swept" space and the one asks the other who he is:—"I do not know, the Shape replied, I only died last night."

KATHARINE HILLARD.

THE MOVEMENT TOWARD CHRISTIAN UNITY

CHRIST prayed that his followers might be one. The Christian of today looks about on a multitude of sects often mutually suspicious of one another, at most tentatively coöperative. It has been said that America gives to the world a sect a day, and that not even the commissioner of the census can keep up with these ecclesiastical fissions. Like the man travelling through a wood who could not see the forest for the trees, the Christian of today can not see the Church for the churches. How, he asks himself, has such a state of affairs ever come about? But the mystic with keen intuition and deep personal devotion thinks of the ruptured body of his lord and sets himself to do what he can to heal those wounds.

Out of this atmosphere—this sense of an intolerable situation—attempts at fusion have arisen. Closely affiliated groups have united in conferences, in social and missionary work. Such efforts have been made by the Protestants in Canada, by the Presbyterians in Scotland and in the United States. Sometimes these attempts have assumed the character of independent organizations as in the case of The Federation of Churches or the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America; sometimes they have merely attained coöperation; in other cases they are hardly more than armed truces. Yet the fact of the efforts is significant. Though haphazard and often ineffective, they have to some extent at least, ploughed up the hard ground of prejudice and separatism ready for the seed which shall grow into the fulfilment of our Lord's prayer, that his followers should be one.

Other influences have strengthened the tendency toward union. The situation on the mission field has been such as to make a scandal of present divisions. The possibility of unity in mission work was demonstrated at the great Edinburgh Conference. Books like Dr. Newman Smyth's *Passing Protestantism and Coming Catholicism* have been widely circulated in many countries and among many denominations. The main schools of modern theological scholarship have overlapped denominational boundaries and established a cosmopolitanism of religion at least among scholars.

The Church of England has always been foremost among churches in its efforts to promote Christian unity. Through the Lambeth Conferences of bishops it has given official expression of its desire for reunion with all other Christians. As early as 1857 an Association for the Promotion of the Unity of Christendom was formed in the English Church. Later a society was established to

advocate principally home reunion—that is union between the protestant bodies in Great Britain and the Church of England. These two organizations played an important part in preparing the way for recent more consecutive efforts.

The movement toward the reunion of Christendom in the Eastern Orthodox Church dates back to the first half of the seventeenth century. In the East there has been constant intercourse between this body and the Church of England. Visits and delegations between England and Russia have increased the good will. In the United States, too, there has been cordial interchange between the Episcopal and the Orthodox Church. Trinity Parish, for instance, has always welcomed the ministers of the Orthodox Church and placed one of its chapels at their disposal for services.

This cordiality of intercourse between the Orthodox and the Anglican and American Episcopal Churches crystallized in the Anglican and Eastern Orthodox Churches Union, founded in London, in July, 1906. The American Branch came into being two years later, in 1908. A similar society for the same purpose was started in Russia in 1912. The objects of this association are to "promote mutual sympathy, understanding and intercourse," and to "promote and encourage action and study furthering reunion."

In America there has long existed a society called The Church Unity Society. Several protestant churches had appointed committees or commissions before the three simultaneous appointments of 1910. Such committees of the Presbyterian and Episcopal Churches were conferring together several years before that date. But the desire for Christian unity first found effective expression in what, because of its four fundamental propositions, has since been known as the "quadrilateral." This "quadrilateral" was set forth by the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church in the General Convention of 1886, and was amended and ratified by the House of Deputies. The Lambeth Conference of 1888 accepted it and incorporated it in its report. Various communications were exchanged with other religious bodies, but there was no formal expression in the shape of a society until July, 1910, when, as the result of the action of twenty-four members of the Episcopal Church, The Christian Unity Foundation was incorporated.

The objects of this society can be summed up as research and conference. Since its incorporation it has held conferences with the Disciples of Christ, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Lutherans, Moravians, Methodists, Reformed Episcopalians and Baptists. In conference with the Presbyterians and Congregationalists certain definite resolutions have been passed embodying the principles upon which corporate reunion might be effected between these bodies and the Episcopalians.

On the side of research the Foundation has issued a number of

leaflets. "A Study on the Disciples of Christ" sets forth the doctrines and status of this body in the United States. It has been accepted by the Disciples as a correct statement of their position and 100,000 copies have been printed. "A Study on Methodism" has met with the approval of Methodists and has been widely circulated. "A Study on the Early Christian Ministry" has been recently published by the Foundation and has attracted considerable attention in the different Protestant churches.

In the year 1910 three commissions on Christian unity were appointed almost simultaneously by three different bodies—the Episcopal Church, the Congregational Church, and the Disciples of Christ. The Commission on Faith and Order appointed at the Episcopal General Convention of 1910 presented an elaborate report to the General Convention of 1913. At that convention it was not only continued, but authority was given it to incorporate itself.

The immediate purpose and scope of this Commission is to bring about as the next step toward unity a Conference for the consideration of questions of Faith and Order, to be participated in by representatives of the whole Christian world, both Catholic and Protestant. "The Conference is for the definite purpose of considering those things in which we differ, in the hope that a better understanding of divergent views of Faith and Order will result in a deepened desire for reunion and in official action on the part of the separated Communions themselves." "All Christian Communions are to be asked to unite with us in arranging for and conducting the Conference. We, ourselves, are to take only preliminary action, and at the earliest possible moment are to act in association with others." The work of the Conference is undertaken with the hope of ultimate unity. The Conference itself is preliminary to any action. The preparation for the Conference is a preliminary—preliminary.

The following resolution was offered in the House of Deputies by the Rev. W. T. Manning, D.D., of New York:

"*Resolved,* The House of Bishops concurring, That a Joint Committee, consisting of seven Bishops, seven Presbyters and seven Laymen, be appointed to take under advisement the promotion by this Church of a Conference following the general method of the World Missionary Conference, to be participated in by representatives of all Christian bodies throughout the world which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour, for the consideration of questions pertaining to the Faith and Order of the Church of Christ, and that said Committee, if it deem such a Conference feasible, shall report to this Convention;"

The Joint Committee of the General Convention of 1910, to which the resolution was referred, reported as follows:

"Your Committee is of one mind. We believe that the time has

now arrived when representatives of the whole family of Christ, led by the Holy Spirit, may be willing to come together for the consideration of questions of Faith and Order. We believe, further, that all Christian Communions are in accord with us in our desire to lay aside self-will, and to put on the mind which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. We would heed this call of the Spirit of God in all lowliness, and with singleness of purpose. We would place ourselves by the side of our fellow Christians, looking not only on our own things, but also on the things of others, convinced that our one hope of mutual understanding is in taking personal counsel together in the spirit of love and forbearance. It is our conviction that such a Conference for the purpose of study and discussion, without power to legislate or to adopt resolutions, is the next step toward unity.

"With grief for our aloofness in the past, and for other faults of pride and self-sufficiency, which make for schism; with loyalty to the truth as we see it, and with respect for the convictions of those who differ from us; holding the belief that the beginnings of unity are to be found in the clear statement and full consideration of those things in which we differ, as well as of those things in which we are at one, we respectfully submit the following resolution:

"WHEREAS, There is to today among all Christian people a growing desire for the fulfilment of Our Lord's prayer that all His disciples may be one; that the world may believe that God has sent Him;

"*Resolved, The House of Bishops concurring,* That a Joint Commission be appointed to bring about a Conference for the consideration of questions touching Faith and Order, and that all Christian Communions throughout the world which confess our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour be asked to unite with us in arranging for and conducting such a Conference. The Commission shall consist of seven Bishops, appointed by the Chairman of the House of Bishops, and seven Presbyters and seven Laymen, appointed by the President of the House of Deputies, and shall have power to add to its number and to fill any vacancies occurring before the next General Convention."

Before the Convention adjourned an official letter and report from the National Council of the Congregational Church of the United States was read and referred to the Joint Commission.

BOSTON, *October* 20, 1910.

REV. RANDOLPH H. MCKIM,
President of the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies,
Protestant Episcopal Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio.

MY DEAR SIR:—The National Council of the Congregational Churches of the United States, at their convention being held in

Boston, have unanimously adopted the enclosed resolutions. In addition they have passed the following vote:

VOTED: *That in view of the possibility of fraternal discussion of Church Unity suggested by the Lambeth Conference of Anglican Bishops in* 1908, *a special commission of five representatives be appointed to consider any overtures that may come to our denomination as a result of this Conference.*

Will you not present these resolutions as adopted to the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church with the sentiments of our fellowship and cordial goodwill?

Yours very truly,

RAYMOND CALKINS.

DRAFT OF REPORT OF COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL.

Tuesday, October 18, 1910, *p. m.*

"WHEREAS, the last Lambeth Conference of the Bishops of the Anglican Communion, which was held in London in 1908, lifted up the ideal of Church unity in these words: We must set before us the Church of Christ as He would have it, one spirit and one body, enriched with all those elements of divine truth which the separated communities of Christians now emphasize, separately, strengthened by the interaction of all the gifts and graces which our divisions now hold asunder, filled with all the fullness of God. We dare not, in the name of peace, barter away those precious things of which we have been made stewards. Neither can we wish others to be unfaithful to trusts which they hold no less sacred. We must fix our eyes on the church of the future, which is to be adorned with all the precious things, both theirs and ours. We must constantly desire not compromise, but comprehension, not uniformity, but unity.

"AND WHEREAS, the Anglican Bishops further recommended that for this end conferences of ministers and laymen of different Christian bodies be held to promote a better mutual understanding; and we, on our part, would seek, as much as lieth in us, for the unity and peace of the whole household of faith; and, forgetting not that our forefathers, whose orderly ministry is our inheritance, were not willingly separatists, we would loyally contribute the precious things of which as Congregationalists we are stewards, to the church of the future; therefore this Council would put on record its appreciation of the spirit and its concurrence in the purpose of this expression of the Lambeth Conference; and voice its earnest hope for closer fellowship with the Episcopal Church in Christian work and worship."

In such a spirit has this great project been undertaken. A growing humility, a clearer and clearer conviction that Christians of all communions have borne false witness against their brothers in other communions, greater toleration and willingness to receive rather than give, an increasing sense of being instruments, rather than initiators, and an increasing dependence on prayer—all these characteristics are noticeable in the leaders of the movement.

Immediately after the appointment of the Episcopal Commission of 1910, steps were taken to secure the coöperation of other Christian bodies. Informal conferences and personal interviews were held, letters and leaflets were sent to every communion throughout the world when adequate information could be obtained. Some invitations, however, were held back because the Commission desired to invite all communions in one country at the same time. By the middle of August, 1913, thirty different religious bodies had appointed commissions.

In June, 1912, a deputation from the American Episcopal Commission conferred with representatives of the Church of England at Lambeth Palace. The result of this conference was that a committee was appointed in the Church of England to "watch the progress of the arrangements for the Conference, organize, support and help in England for these endeavors, and especially stimulate general interest and regular and widespread prayer in the matter. It would rest with this committee to make arrangements for any local or preliminary conferences in England which may be expedient." The representatives of the English church present, recommended that the American origin of the plan be borne in mind, "as also the possibility or probability that the ultimate Conference, when held, would be on American soil." And it was decided that "invitations to other religious bodies, or denominations, than the Church of England should emanate not from the Committee above-named, or from the Church of England, as such, but from the co-religionists in America of each denomination in England." The deputation then proceeded to Scotland and Ireland.

On the eighth of May, 1913, an informal conference of representatives of all the commissions which had, up to that time, been appointed in the United States was held in New York. As this was the first meeting on any considerable scale of "representatives of the different commissions for consideration of the problems involved in the work of preparing for the World Conference" it was of great importance and marked a distinct step forward in the movement. One has only to read the report of this meeting to realize that the unity of Christendom is really practicable. Questions relating to the World Conference were faced and discussed with the utmost frankness, but in the most harmonious spirit. There was not one jarring note. In fact it seemed to be the aim of everyone that his

communion should be known for its gentle humility and magnanimous generosity. For instance a representative of the Disciples of Christ offered, in behalf of that body, to bear the expenses of the publication and distribution of a book representing the spirit of the various communions. A member of the Episcopal Commission moved that a deputation of five be sent to the Protestant Communions (non-Anglican) of Great Britain and Ireland. It was, he said, the wish of the representatives of the Episcopal Commission that this commission should consist entirely of members of other communions, but that its expenses be borne by the Commission of the Episcopal Church. The only opposition to this motion by other commissions was in their earnest insistence that the Episcopal Church should be represented on the deputation. A compromise was ultimately effected by asking the Rev. Tissington Tatlow of the Church of England to act with the deputation for conference and counsel.

The meeting further resolved upon an Advisory Committee composed of one representative of each of the commissions already appointed, and of the commissions yet to be appointed to coöperate with the Executive Committee of the Episcopal Commission. The ideal of the World Conference was defined as "a great meeting participated in by men of all Christian churches within the scope of the call, at which there shall be consideration not only of points of difference and agreement between Christians, but of the values of the various approximations of belief characteristic of the several churches." Organic unity, though an ideal, is not the business of the commissions, but merely to promote the holding of such a conference. Questions to be considered at the World Conference should be formulated in advance by committees of competent men representative of various schools of thought.

Three magazines have sprung up expressing the movement toward the reunion of Christendom. The *Eirene,* published intermittently in London, represents the Anglican-Orthodox agreement. The *Christian Union Quarterly,* published in St. Louis, U. S. A., is a "journal in the interest of peace in the divided Church of Christ." It is published by the Disciples of Christ and is in its third year. The *Constructive Quarterly,* New York and London, was started early in 1913. It offers itself as a forum where all phases of the movement can find expression. It attempts to set forth the constructive method of comprising and sympathetically presenting widely divergent Christian standpoints, in order that the different communions of Christendom can be reintroduced to one another. Each writer is expected to state the position, and express the spiritual values of his churches as he sees them, without compromise. No attack with polemical animus is allowed. That is all. Yet the significant thing about the *Constructive Quarterly* is that it does actually represent almost the whole of Christianity. On its editorial board

are men of widely different schools of thought—Catholic and Protestant—from three continents. In its pages can be found clear but courteous statements from the most important commissions of Christendom.

Thus it is evident that the movement toward the reunion of Christendom is neither an effort toward a monochrome uniformity nor a poet's dream. The men who are guiding it are sane, efficient and consecrated. Their spirit is the spirit of him who said, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on things of others." They are trying to be children of the kingdom, and by laying aside self-will and ceasing to bear false witness one against another to follow the guidance of Him who is endeavoring to unite that which is divided and to testify of Him to the world by their unity and their love.

LOUISE EDGAR PETERS.

NOTE.—Leaflets giving the history of the movement since 1910 can be obtained free from Mr. Robert H. Gardiner, Gardiner, Maine, Secretary of the Episcopal Commission, or from Dr. Arthur Lowndes, 143 East 37th Street, New York, Secretary of the Christian Unity Foundation.

Mystery is not a transient trouble in human experience to be removed by increasing knowledge. Rather, it is a permanent problem made more urgent by increasing knowledge.

H. E. FOSDICK.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

Meditation and Mental Distractions.

THE Recorder was in despair. He had been unusually busy, and it seemed to him impossible to sort and to arrange further, for the next issue of The Quarterly, the mass of correspondence and the records left in his custody by Mrs. S. In this emergency the Gael volunteered a suggestion.

"I can usually talk," he said, "when I am not wanted to do so. How would it do if I were to talk now and perhaps relieve the situation for you? It so happens that I was asked a question the other day which there was no opportunity to answer at the time; and I might attempt some reply now, through the pages of the 'Screen.'" The Recorder gladly acquiesced.

"I was asked what to do in order to control distraction during prayer and meditation. My belief is that there are a great many people who would like to ask the same question and to hear it discussed. A man begins, let us suppose, to repeat the Lord's Prayer. Almost at once his mind flies off at a tangent, and he has to pull it back by main force and exert what he would regard as very difficult control in order to compel it to attend to the business in hand.

"It will be best first to consider the ideal—that type of prayer at which we should aim and which has been attained by the saints and disciples of the past and which so far as we know is the attainment of disciples today. It is quite clear, I think, that if we meet some one whom we love and have the opportunity for half an hour's close intercourse, we do not need to control our minds or to use violence in order to fix our attention on what we are doing. Our hearts, presumably, are full of pleasurable anticipation, our minds are full of things we want to speak of, and also we long to hear what may be said in reply, as well as the news or ideas which we may receive. In any case, the thought of communion, of fellowship, fills us with delight.

"Let us use the illustration of a man and his wife, in simple circumstances. Let us suppose they are working together in the fields of Germany, or in some small store or shop in a village of France. The wife, in that case, would be the bookkeeper and would sit in the front part of the shop, while the husband waited on their customers. We must suppose that they are so fully occupied during the day that, although in view of one another, it would rarely be possible for them to exchange remarks not immediately connected with their business. They are working for the sake of their children. They would be united by that common bond, and we must suppose them to be

united also by mutual love. Would there not be many thoughts that they would wish to exchange at the end of the day's work? Is it not obvious that they must look forward to some interval of rest in order to compare together the experiences of the day? Would there be any sense of constraint in a case of that kind? Surely in no circumstances could there be the need of mental control! Suppose that one or the other is so tired that speech itself becomes impossible. Would they not, even in that case, find rest and satisfaction in the silent communion of their love?

"What does this mean? It seems to me that we can draw a lesson from the illustration I have used, even though it cannot be pushed too far. The saints find that kind of companionship when turning to their Master. They find in him a friend and elder brother, to whom, without reserve, they can pour out their hearts,—all that interests and concerns them, particularly the welfare of his children and their own. Of course another element enters in when the other side of the Master's nature is recognized. There is the feeling of his majesty and splendor. There is the feeling of unworthiness in the heart of the disciple. There is the sense of the Master's immense condescension in treating them as his children and friends. Human love is not our topic. If it were, I should like to suggest at this point that many human relationships are spoiled by lack of awe and of reverence, such as is so obviously essential to any divine relationship.

"Love, therefore, is the secret of all true prayer. And if as yet we know not love, then there must be intensity of desire.

"The lepers who asked the Master, Jesus, to cure them, did not have to concentrate their minds upon the wording of their prayer; they did not have to control any wandering of their thoughts. They were intent upon that which they desired. The marvellous prayer of the Publican, which has remained ever since as the model of what prayer should be, was the outpouring of a contrite heart. It was the simple and direct expression of a feeling. The prayer of the Prodigal Son to his father was a genuine petition. Can we imagine that he had to control his mind, or that his thoughts wandered while he prayed? Think of the prophet Ezra: "And at the evening sacrifice I arose up from my heaviness, and having rent my garments and my mantle, I fell upon my knees and spread out my hands unto the Lord my God, and said, 'O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to Thee, my God, for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the very heavens.' Here was a man who, for the time being, had become the embodiment of prayer. Incidentally he had identified himself with the sins of his people, and there must necessarily be a certain element of that in all true prayer, some enlargement of the heart so as to include others in our prayer, and in time to include their sins with our own in our desire for pardon.

"These men, if they had not entered into the deeper mysteries

of love, had in any case intensity of feeling to give reality to their communion with God.

"We, perhaps, have neither the love nor the intensity. In that case, what are we to do? We must use every faculty we possess in order to awaken the consciousness of the heart. In the last analysis it is the heart, alone, that can pray. And granting that our hearts, as yet, are cold and numb, we have it within our power none the less, by the right use of our other faculties, to bring about, within ourselves, that condition which does exist in times of emergency or of distress or of natural love. For this, we must use memory, imagination, understanding and will. A man must prepare himself before he begins to pray. The first thing for him to do is to put himself in the presence of his Master. He might well imitate Saint Teresa, who, before saying the Lord's Prayer, imagined herself to be standing with the Apostles when Christ taught them how to pray. First, she used memory, recalling the incident; then her imagination, picturing the time, the place, the persons and their behaviour. Then, by further use of her imagination, she threw herself with desire into the past, and felt herself to be present with those people at that time. This is only another way of saying that she brought the past into the present; the fact of course being that in the spiritual world past and present and future are one. A spiritual fact, or some incident in the life of a Master, is a living actuality; and it is within the power of those who pray to enter into that incident just as truly as if they were taking part in it when it first occurred.

"After the memory and the imagination have been used, comes the use of the understanding. Let us suppose, for instance, that Saint Teresa, saying the Lord's Prayer, came to the petition, 'Thy Kingdom come.' Remember, please, that she is saying it as the Apostles said it—she is saying it with them, in the presence of her Master; she is saying it slowly; she uses her understanding; she asks herself what these words mean. The first meaning is obvious enough. There is the desire that the Master may rule on earth, as he rules already in Heaven. But she knows full well that His kingdom cannot come on earth until it be established within herself. So she asks herself what she can do to bring it about, either by the expulsion from herself of things antagonistic to His will, or by the cultivation within herself of qualities and virtues such as she believes must exist within her before His reign can come in the earth of her own nature. So she asks herself, always in His presence, looking up into His face, what she can do in order to bring His Kingdom within her. She has realized long ago that general resolutions are useless. She knows full well that she must decide upon something to be done today. At a particular time during the day, when as a rule there is every opportunity to be impatient, she will try to make herself not only patient but sympathetic; or she will look for opportunities throughout the

day to exercise some particular quality. Whenever the clock strikes, perhaps, she will use some simple ejaculation of prayer or of worship. There will be nothing vague about her resolution. She has used her memory, her imagination, her understanding. All of this will be useless unless she bring the result to earth by means of action; she will obey her resolution, and therefore will increase her love—love being the offspring of obedience, just as obedience is the offspring of love.

"But that is only the barest outline of the process, and it will be necessary in most cases to give far more time to the use of the memory. Some book should be read which will do for us that which, at first, it is difficult to do for ourselves. It may be a book of written meditations, or, perhaps, the New Testament itself.

"In the case of those who are not Christians, exactly the same principle should be applied, even if the sequence of thought be different. Suppose a man who does not believe in what he calls Christianity, but who accepts fully and to its logical conclusion the theory of evolution. This means that he believes in the perfectibility of man. As a preliminary to his prayer or meditation, he should think of the great souls of the past, who, as the result of their own efforts, have climbed the ladder of life ahead of the race as a whole, and who foreshadow our own ultimate achievement. His mind can recall incidents, let us say in the life of Buddha, or he can use his memory in a more abstract way, so as to bring vividly to his consciousness the whole scheme of evolution, spiritual, intellectual and material. He sees himself as an atom, and yet as reflecting on that infinitely small surface the face of the universe itself. He realizes that he contains within himself, potentially, all that the highest can ever become. He thinks of the suffering in the world, and longs to relieve it; he thinks of the lack of joy, and longs to give joy. He asks himself how the great ones have attained and he gets the immediate reply that they have become what they are through the conquest of self; they have raised themselves above the level of the little and the commonplace; they have become, not impersonal, but divinely personal. They have transformed their personalities, and, with the help of those who have gone before them, have transmuted alchemically lead into gold.

"As memory, imagination and understanding are exercised, little by little desire grows. At the first attempt the result may be insignificant, but as the effort is repeated they will bring themselves, at last, into contact with one of those great beings whose desire it is, at all times, to help and to encourage the least effort that we make. Then, suddenly, before they are aware of what is taking place, they will find that their hearts are no longer cold. Later, to their amazement, they will find that the warmth has turned into flame—at last, maybe, into a passion of longing such as they have not dared to hope

for. Then they will be able to pray: and then they will come to understand that what they have regarded as their own exertions and longing are nothing but the reflection within themselves of the love of the Master to whose Ray they belong."

The Recorder, at this point, interrupted, "What you have said suggests that no effort needs to be made until the time has come for action; I mean for the carrying out of the resolution previously arrived at. Can it be as easy as you would lead one to suppose?"

"It follows clearly, I think, from what I have said, that a certain degree of preliminary effort is necessary, but no more than a student makes who sits down to study the grammar of some foreign tongue. I am supposing also that the student in this case has trained himself to concentrate his mind on whatever his task may be, and to throw himself, heart and soul, into the performance of all of his duties. If he be a man of affairs, and immersed during the greater part of the day in business, he must have learned to turn rapidly from one subject to another, and to give his whole attention to each. Therefore it ought not to be difficult for him to turn his attention from his business, or from the other matters which ordinarily preoccupy him, to the book of devotion which he may be reading, and to throw himself, with the utmost mental energy, into the consideration of his subject. This, of course, bears out the old saying that the character of our prayer is determined, to a great extent, by the activities of preceding hours. In other words, if we meander through life, if our thoughts during the day are scattered, if, habitually, we fail to concentrate our minds on the performance of our duties, then, inevitably, our time of prayer must reflect the chaotic condition of our ordinary mental processes. If also we permit ourselves to be obsessed by some thought or worry, we must suffer for it, not only during our period of meditation, but also during the performance of any other duty whatsoever. No one, however, can defend or excuse obsession of that kind. On the face of it, it is a condition to be overcome.

"Whether we pray or not, we should in any case be able to give our whole attention to some book of our own choosing. This by rights should be one that will interest our minds, and ought to be chosen with that purpose in view. There are very few people who can jump directly into prayer; out of half an hour, it would be wise to give the first quarter of an hour, at least, to reading; and this reading ought to be carefully selected, according to the need of each individual, and also according to that individual's need at some particular time. There may be days when even a beginner will find delight in the Meditations of so ardent a soul as Saint Alphonsus. There may be other days when, his mind being uppermost, he needs something more substantial intellectually, and he should vary his reading, therefore, according to his condition. The purpose, in any case, is to arouse and to increase his love of the ideal, and this natur-

ally includes his love of the spiritual world and of spiritual persons, and above all, of his own spiritual becoming, for the sake of those spiritual persons whom he desires to love.

"You may well find fault with the attempt I have made to reply to my friend's question; the subject is so vast, and the question is so difficult to answer generally. People, I think, are inclined to forget that it is as impossible to prescribe for would-be disciples, in general, as it would be ridiculous for a physician to prescribe for a regiment of soldiers—he must, of necessity, consider each case, and after careful diagnosis determine what remedy, if any, should be administered, or what the normal diet should be. In a spiritual sense, nearly all of us are ill, and therefore require special treatment. The utmost one can hope to do is to suggest certain principles which must underlie the treatment of all cases. Then, if a man be so unfortunate as to be compelled to prescribe for himself, he can at least set to work in the light of those principles, and try to work out his own salvation. One thing is certain: the more simple we are and the more direct, the more effective we shall be in prayer and in all other departments of life. The great saints have not been complicated in their method of approach; they have done that which others have talked about doing; they have gone directly to the place of their desire; and although this has been easy for them, after years of experience, they must in all cases have begun it by the use of simple faith, which convinced them that the Master they desired to reach was far more desirous of reaching them; and that whatever their longing to hear might be, his longing to teach them how to listen must be infinitely greater."

The Philosopher had been unusually attentive. "I do not think you have laid sufficient emphasis," he said, "on the character of our general thinking. There are barriers between ourselves and the Master which take the form of mental distractions. Perhaps it would be more true to say that we fail to recognize His presence, and therefore fail to give him our undivided attention, because of clouds between Him and us which we ourselves create. Consequently He does not seem near, and our prayers appear to us to be spoken into empty space, or to beat back upon us as if rebounding from rock. Every sin is such a barrier, so long as we fail to recognize and to struggle against it. Lack of charity, condemnation of others, feelings of anger, of annoyance, suspicion, create a cloud which utterly conceals, for the time being, the fact of the Master's presence. That is one reason why so much stress is laid on forgiveness of others as a preliminary to prayer, as, for instance, first be reconciled with your brother and then bring your gift to the altar. To speak theologically, we must seek and must obtain first the "grace" which makes forgiveness possible, before we can hope for the "grace" which makes further prayer effective. Perhaps the easiest and quickest

way to accomplish this is to begin by praying for those who have annoyed us. Our prayer may be perfunctory, but as we persevere "grace" will grow. As we become able to ask blessings heartily for our supposed enemy, blessings will begin to flow in upon ourselves, even without the asking.

"In any case, when troubled by distractions in prayer, by wandering thoughts, we should seek always for the *moral* cause in ourselves —not resting content with some explanation based upon lack of mental control. And again as always we should be particular, not general. Nothing is more foolish than to say, 'Well, it is just part of my general badness!' We must seek the particular defect.

"There are, of course, other ways of approaching the same subject—and as many ways as possible ought to be considered. Not many days ago I was rereading an old book on prayer, in the form of question and answer, which contained some excellent advice, though quaintly worded. In reply to the question, 'In what does purity of mind consist?' the author replied to this effect: In overcoming the false independence which naturally inclines us to think of what pleases us so long as it seems not to be evil; or at least in possessing enough self-restraint to keep our minds from constantly running about after the vain images of material things, as children run after butterflies."

The Recorder, frankly desirous of more good "copy," challenged the Philosopher with the question, "But does your quaint author go back to the foundations of things, as you were asking the Gael to do; does he explain why we need this purity of mind in prayer?"

The Philosopher answered: "So far as I can remember the author replied to a similar question as follows: If the mind is accustomed to wander continually among these idle thoughts, it cannot enter into itself at the time of prayer; and above all, it cannot practise that kind of prayer called 'simple recollection' which naturally requires great recollection of mind. Moreover if our mind is always roving about amid all sorts of amusing or agreeable objects, how can we withdraw our inner sight from these things and fix it on the invisible? Even if we could do so for a moment or two, these vain ideas and pleasing images would be continually trying to reinstate themselves in the imagination, like the clouds of dust around a traveller that keep him from seeing where he is and whither he is going. We must, therefore, resist the natural wanderings of the mind and continually restrain the natural activity of the soul by not permitting it to entertain itself with, nor even voluntarily to wander among vain, frivolous or useless thoughts. We must look upon all these just as if they were really wicked; and we must act as if they were so, the moment we discover them."

The Gael evidently found in this old mystic a sympathetic spirit, for us soon as the Philosopher paused for a moment, he said,

"But did I not hear you say that your fine old book is in question and answer form? And where was the questioner all this time?"

"Temporarily suppressed," answered the Philosopher, "lest someone here," looking at the Recorder, "should feel that his rightful province was being usurped. But suppose I read to you from the book itself? This is how it runs:

Question.—This kind of purity seems to me the most difficult of all.

Answer.—So it really is, but take notice: when once we have experienced a first taste of God and this sweet peace of His, we feel ourselves constantly called back again by the sweet remembrance of this taste which makes us involuntarily forget everything else. And as this same attraction tends little by little to give us a disgust for creatures [by which he means "material things"], we finally come to advert to them only, as it were, with reluctance. Then we enjoy mental liberty because we no longer willingly attend to anything but God and heavenly things.

Question.—But what must we do to reach this happy state?

Answer.—By studying recollection, we must labor to destroy or at least to weaken our unfortunate attachments; for these give rise to the thoughts which are most alluring and hardest to dismiss. Accordingly as they are weakened, we feel less pain in withdrawing mind and thought from what we have already commenced to forsake in heart and affection.

Question.—What is to be done with thoughts which are merely useless or frivolous?

Answer.—We must drop them out of the mind as we would drop a stone from the hand. If through inadvertence, we ever allow ourselves to be amused by them, we must, as soon as this is discovered, recall the wandering mind, whether by simple remembrance of God (or of the Master) or by a brief elevation of the heart to Him, or by the help of a good thought prepared in advance and ready for use when needed.

Question.—Of course you do not class as useless either reflection upon present necessities, or wise forethought for the future, or holy considerations about ourselves and our spiritual advancement?

Answer.—Who has ever dared to say or even to think that these are useless? But do you wish to know one of the most artful ruses of self-love, so jealous of preserving that freedom of thought which forms its nourishment and its life? Do you wish to know a very subtile illusion caused by the natural activity of the mind which, only by the aid of painful and almost continual self-denial, can restrain its thoughts and reflections within the bounds of strict necessity? If so, let us discuss together the four points just mentioned by you.

1.—Under pretence that we must think of what we are going to

do or say, so many useless and superfluous thoughts and reflections come to us that often the very time we lose in deliberating and considering unimportant things would be enough for the execution of them. And as for the more important things,—each of which demands its own share of time, although we try to think of all at the same moment,—they often cause in the soul a confusion of thoughts and reflections, which so agitates, disquiets and disturbs that whole interior and so overwhelms the mind, that we can no longer think either of God, or of ourselves, or even of what we should be doing.

2.—Under pretence of providing for the future, and, as we say, of not tempting Providence, we spend much time in heaping thought upon thought, reflection upon reflection, plan upon plan; we exhaust ourselves with uneasy forebodings, with anxious fears, and often with useless precautions; but when the time comes, appearances change, or we alter our ideas and opinions; and then we begin to take new measures, often just the contrary of those so uselessly thought out and so vainly resolved upon previously.

3.—Under pretence of what we call examination or holy introspection, we discuss certain affairs and hold certain conversations. Every trifling circumstance of time, place, person, and speech is recalled, and is followed immediately by a new crowd of reflections worse than useless, since generally they serve only to create vain joys, vain fears, or still vainer hopes. All these in turn tend only to augment our natural dissipation of mind and to destroy our interior peace, by carrying uneasiness and anxiety into the very depths of the soul.

4.—Finally, under pretence of spiritual advancement, we vainly and almost incessantly employ ourselves in continually, or at any rate unseasonably, recalling the heavenly blessings and graces received, and our courageous-oblation of all actions and suffering past and present; and still more in amusing ourselves with a thousand good and holy plans for the future, at the expense of the present. All the above are thoughts which interior self-denial and true mortification should continually suppress.

Question.—By what means shall we restrain the mind's natural activity? How shall we bring ourselves to the constant renunciation of this dearest delight of self-love?

Answer.—The means is to say to oneself on these occasions: "Such and such things have occurred. What is the use of worrying about them now? As to what should be done or said in the future, that can be considered at the proper time. God will provide for everything. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. Will not tomorrow and the following day bring with them their own graces? Let me think then, only of the present as God Himself bids us do.

Let me leave the past to his mercy and the future to his providence; and meanwhile, let me labor peacefully and quietly for perfection of service first, and for other things later on. As to the outcome, let me leave it to God, casting all my cares upon His paternal bosom, in the belief that He, as Saint Peter says, 'hath care of us.'" With simple confidence and abandonment, we should say to God: "Lord, without wishing to neglect anything which You prescribe for the good of my soul or body, I hope that at the proper time and place, You will give me the thought, the impulse, and the ability to undertake and perform such and such affairs, which keep coming into my mind, so often and so unseasonably. I abandon them and their outcome to You, in order that I may more fully devote myself to You; that I may wait patiently and with perfect resignation, until all things happen as Your wise providence ordains."

"Does your author mean to suggest," asked the Student, "that we should abandon all attachments and become living mummies?"

"I do not think so," the Philosopher replied. "If that was his intention, he was certainly wrong. And that was not the doctrine of the saints. Their teaching was and is that all human love and all human attachment is evil unless it draw us nearer to the Master: is, in other words, a misuse, a perversion, of a divine power. On the other hand, attachments which draw us more closely to Him, must be in line with his will. The point, as I see it, is that we should beware of becoming entangled, enmeshed, or of allowing ourselves to grow into a state of dependence upon any external prop or stimulus; and that we should practise self-control, and thus gain the dominion over ourselves which at present we lack, by constant regulation of the mind and feelings. In this way we shall be able to bring a controlled mind to our prayer and meditation."

"I agree with what you have said," the Gael commented. "But there is one thing I want to add: nothing, absolutely nothing can be done without desire. One reason why people have so much trouble with meditation or prayer is that they do not put as much desire into it as they would into the practice of a musical instrument or into learning a game of cards. Theosophy is an experimental science. Suppose you were studying chemistry. You would perhaps attend some preparatory lectures on the theory of it. Then you would be permitted to put into simple practice some of the things you had learned theoretically. What interest you would bring to the task! How earnestly you would desire to perform well, and to carry to a successful conclusion, the experiment recommended as illustration and proof of the theory you had learned! And think of the immense reward of spiritual progress and of any knowledge of the Master—rewards so great that those who have known what it is to govern kingdoms have laughed at human success after a taste of spiritual

satisfaction. There is no comparison. And although it is difficult, I admit, to desire that which is unseen and unknown by our physical senses, we have at all times the help of those who, though in some cases as yet unknown to us, are none the less our friends, giving us the utmost of help on behalf of the Master whose love draws us, slowly but irresistibly, back to his heart which is in itself, for those who belong to him, the source of light, of love, of joy, of power." T.

ELEMENTARY ARTICLE

We Cause Our Own Suffering

WE cause our own suffering. We have all heard and read this view before, and most of us, perhaps, would grant its truth. But we have found from experience that there is an immense difference between a theory and its practical application to life. When this is the case it is often wise to analyse the theory so as to bring it down from the general to the particular, from the abstract to the concrete.

We all have difficulties: especially do those have them who are deliberately trying to live a higher life. We have family troubles; our relations with our friends are strained and painful; we are misunderstood; our work is difficult and complicated; we cannot see clearly our duty and are puzzled what to do. There is a skeleton in every closet, but in the case of the would-be disciple, the skeleton does not stay locked up; it insists upon coming out of the closet and upon parading, in all its naked hideousness before our very eyes, until we are driven nearly frantic with nervous dread and apprehension; and yet "we cause our own suffering."

It is not that the skeleton does not exist and that we are the victims of our imaginations. It is that the skeleton is a perfectly harmless collection of dry bones that cannot hurt us, and to which we need pay but the attention necessary to grasp it by the nearest bone, lead it back to the closet again and lock it up. Every time we do this we should pull off a bone or two and throw them away. Before very long the skeleton will be dismembered and will cease to exist.

How then do we cause our own suffering? First, because there would be no skeleton at all unless we had originally manufactured it in this or some other life; and second, because, once there, instead of treating it for what it really is, a harmless aggregation of dry bones, we clothe it with every imaginable attribute of horror and allow it such power over us that its contemplation gives us excessive pain. We cause our own suffering because this horror, this ability to make us suffer, is not in the skeleton, it is in us. We allow these cords to be vibrated by the skeleton, which of itself has no ability to play upon

our nerves, and can operate only with the power and to the extent that we allow.

Why do we do this? Mostly from ignorance. Intolerable situations cease to be intolerable when we understand them. Some one we love is ill and through our sympathies we suffer until life is a living hell. How do we cause this suffering? How are we personally responsible for this unnecessary pain? Through ignorance. Looked at superficially we can see no reason for the loved one's illness, and hence for our intolerable pain. But there always is a reason why that illness is the best conceivable thing for the loved ones; just what they need to bring them quickest *and easiest* into the Kingdom of Heaven. This again we grant with our minds as a philosophical or religious truth, but we do not grasp and experience it with our hearts. If we did we would not find the situation intolerable. We must suffer still. We can picture the Father as suffering with Jesus on the cross, but also we can picture Him as filled with divine joy because of the grandeur of the work then being accomplished.

Yes, we may say, it is all very well to explain suffering by God's knowledge of its fruits. Perhaps if *we* could see as He could, the incalculable good that would come from the sacrifice of Jesus, we could bear the pain, but how about Mary and the apostles? They did not have this knowledge. How was their suffering their fault? If ignorance is the reason why we suffer, why are we allowed to remain ignorant?

The answer is a little more complicated, but still very clear. The only reason why we are ignorant, why we have not all the knowledge the Father Himself has about every problem, is because of our limitations, which are self-created things of the past: the result of sin, of disobedience to law. We come into life handicapped with these limitations in every direction. They make us see everything distorted, reversed, in wrong perspective. Even the simplest and most commonplace fact takes on some personal color, is perceived in some wrong way. All our affairs are viewed through discolored lenses; our skeleton—a mere aggregation of dry bones—appears malignant, powerful, ruthless, vindictive; able and anxious to inflict every possible kind of horror upon us of which our unhealthy imaginations can conceive. The Father sees this. But what can He do about it? He knows that the skeleton is only a harmless aggregation of dry bones; He knows it cannot hurt us; He tells us this in every way in which a fact can be communicated to human consciousness. He tells it ceaselessly, in all languages, at all times; by symbol, by allegory, by art, by science, by music, by poetry, by literature, by sermons, by books, by Christ's example, by life itself in all its infinite ramifications.

But we do not understand, and so we suffer. What then is there left for Him to do about it? Only one thing, and that is what

He does. In His wisdom, He knows that the very fire of this apparently useless suffering will gradually burn away the discolorations which keep us from seeing clearly, and that the more we suffer the faster will this cleansing process go on. He knew that it was the anguish of the apostles which would enable them to have that ultimate vision and understanding of Christ's mission which made them what they became. He knew they would not grudge the price. Yet even so He did His best, Christ did His best, to prepare them, to warn them, to explain again and yet again. But they were what they were; their limitations prevented their seeing; and with that beautiful compensation of spiritual law, it was the suffering caused by their limitations, which burned their limitations away, and enabled them to see.

That is what the Father, and hence what life is doing for each one of us. We suffer through ignorance, ignorance caused by our limitations; limitations caused by our past sins. But by the magnificent compassion of God and because the universe is made that way, this situation automatically cures itself, because the suffering burns away the limitations, the limitations gone, we see the facts; and seeing the facts, we cease to suffer and find joy.

Our task them is threefold: first, to bear courageously and uncomplainingly our present suffering; second, to seek the lesson which Father is trying to teach us and which our suffering should make us confront; third, to assist the process of purification by strenuous and constant efforts to reverse the manner of our lives in every direction in which the limitations have been built up.

The tone, the spirit, of *The New Order of Sainthood,* by Professor Fairfield Osborn, is altogether admirable. Most cordially do we approve also of the author's statement that "The two great historic movements of Love and of Knowledge, of the spiritual and intellectual and physical well-being of man, are harmonious parts of a single and eternal truth." But when he asks us to admit Pasteur among the saints, does he not ask that which Pasteur himself would have repudiated? It is our duty to do everything in our power which is right, to preserve the life of the body. But why? Solely to serve the purposes of soul; to give that much more opportunity for the development of character and for the attainment of that perfection which is man's destiny. Professor Osborn probably realizes this as clearly as we do. But as a scientist, as one of that fold, is there not even greater need to convert his fellows to that view, than to convert the church (the purpose of his booklet) to an appreciation of material Science? We venture to go further; for, if we could, we would enlist the aid of Professor Osborn to convert the church from its worship of material things—from its spiritless humanitarianism, its mechanical institutionalism, its childish awe of the modern spirit—to some recognition of eternal purposes and of universal, endless growth into self-conscious unity with God. E. T. H.

Letters to His Friends, by Forbes Robinson. A new edition of these *Letters* makes the total number of copies issued since their publication in 1904, sixteen thousand. Surely it is an indisputable sign of a rising tide of spirituality. There is nothing sensational or controversial in the volume that might give it a "run." The *Letters* are simply religious, genuinely religious. If a large percentage of the sixteen thousand readers be fellow communicants of the author, that is, Anglicans or Episcopalians, and there are as many as ten thousand readers in one church interested in letters that are deeply religious, the outlook for the future is even more encouraging.

The book manifests the working of Theosophical leaven, and is a splendid illustration of some cardinal Theosophical doctrines. The author's most salient quality is sympathy. We sometimes interpret sympathy to mean "pity" or "condolence." Mr. Robinson knew that to sympathize with a man we must enter into the man's position, see with the man's eyes, feel with his heart, think with his mind. Only when we have thus entered into the being of another can we know anything about him or endeavor to help. Such sympathy requires the setting aside of self. It is the very reverse of selfishness. And it brings immense enlargement as a fruit. Mr. Robinson's sympathy is thoroughgoing. The Divine Compassion shines through it. And we feel that he is one who knew the Master. "When I get quite quiet, and my mind is sane, and my conscience at rest, when I almost stop thinking, and listen, I am quite sure that a Personal Being comes to me, and, as He comes, brings some of His own life to flow into my life." (Letter of June 27, 1892.) John Wilfrid Orr.

Some Adventures of the Soul, by C. M. Verschoyle. The lives and writings of the Saints are, to a large extent, unknown to the "world." There are notable exceptions, such as the *Imitation* and *The Flowers of Saint Francis.* And the number of these exceptions is increasing. People of the world are coming more and more to recognise that Saints have left invaluable comments upon the Way to Happiness. But mystical writings have not yet dominated secular life. Therefore we welcome, with great pleasure, a volume of verse that sets forth experiences of the inner life, in a form to which those who award the world's prize of distinction must give very high praise. C. M. Verschoyle writes in the two styles that are familiar from Francis Thompson's work; one, is the inimitably naive style of *Ex ore Infantium.*

Little Jesus, wast thou shy
Once, and just so small as I?

"A Prayer and The Gift" are examples of this charming simplicity. The second is the elaborate Latin style of "The Hound of Heaven." But this new author, in his management of rich phraseology, does not exhibit the occasional lapses of Thompson's immaturity. The vocabulary is freighted with Elizabethan store, "Argosies of Purple Sail," "Plangent Minors," etc.

We commend the book to all who seek spiritual treasure and exquisite literary form. ALFRED WILLISTON.

Ara Coeli: An Essay in Mystical Theology, by Arthur Chandler, Bishop of Bloemfontein. This book is a real contribution to Christian Mysticism, and should appeal to all who are interested in the growth and expansion of the Church. The author is a member of the Church of England, and he maintains that his Communion "is the best sphere for the cultivation of mystical religion." Avoiding not only in letter but in spirit any controversy with Roman Catholicism, he points out that it was over-organization and suspicion that caused the almost invariable persecution which the great well-known mystics had to endure. The Anglican Church is free from these faults; with a strong framework of institutional religion, it supplies also space and freedom; it is not burdened with the over-elaboration of external observances nor by an exaggerated exercise of authority. Mysticism is the "Religion of Experience," the mystic way is pre-eminently, in his opinion, a life.

The first seven chapters deal with the early stages of mystical development;—Disillusionment, Detachment, Mortification, The Christ-Life, Meditation. In these the author reveals a sure knowlege, gleaned from personal experience as well as from study. He quotes widely from the great mystics, and enters sympathetically into their spirit and intention. In fact, in these chapters Bishop Chandler shows that he knows, by personal experience, what mysticism and discipleship mean; and he openly proclaims that we are called to be saints. Coming from one of the heads of the Church, this conviction should carry weight; and it is with pleasure that we welcome so clear a statement of belief from such a quarter, where for too long a time low ideals and a spirit of compromise have held sway. In the chapters on Contemplation he writes obviously from second-hand, and has missed to some degree that which the saints themselves have written about this highest state before final complete union with the Master. Perhaps the worst fault of the book is the very limited understanding of what this final Communion with the Master means and becomes. To him the visions of the saints were flashes of revelation, only to be realized fully and continuously in heaven, after death. He does not see that "the kingdom of heaven is within," and that what he relegates to an after death beatitude has been and can be lived by every saint here and now. He does not realize the humanity of Jesus, and therefore banishes him from this world to the hereafter; and he attempts to explain the familiar intercourse of the saints with their beloved Master by the complicated theories of modern psychology,—that they

projected their own personality, or a newly awakened part of it, to the field of their higher consciousness, identifying the latter with the divine inspiration, the grace, which they felt to be working in their souls. This is too frequently the attitude taken by the Protestant Churches; an attitude that while, perhaps, the result of a reaction from the mediæval miracles and divine interference of the Church, is yet sadly at variance with the teaching of Jesus himself. In the final chapters, entitled "All Things Are Yours," and "Symbol and Sacrament," he makes a strong plea for the manliness and sanity of living the spiritual life. The mystic does not leave the world, but lives "in order to gather it up into the life of God in which we have learnt to live. In God we have found the glory of a liberty which consists in our sonship to Him; and now the rest of creation, alienated from Him through our apostacy, is to be reconciled to Him with ourselves in Christ." In this work the spiritual man is equipped with the assurance of success and largeness of outlook. "If we are on the look-out for eccentricities, we shall be disappointed. He has no special idiosyncrasies or mannerisms, does not isolate himself from other people, but goes about his business and does his duty in much the same way as any ordinary good Christian man. . . . He is a man who believes intensely in prayer as the strongest and most beneficent power in the universe, and in some form or other his life is largely made up of prayer . . . besides being quiet and reticent, he strikes the careful observer as extraordinarily happy. . . . Goodness, in his eyes, is not a grumbling sacrifice to the proprieties, but *Christ dwelling in Him.*"

These extracts may, perhaps, stimulate the reader to further investigation, for we recommend this book as a straightforward exposition of the new religious insight arising within the Church. A. G.

Dharma. For several years those who have been privileged to attend the T. S. Conventions have listened to most cordial letters of greeting from Caracas, and interesting accounts of the work done in Venezuela. I, myself, still remember distinctly portions of those letters. After hearing them my silent comment has been: "I wish I might know those distant brothers more intimately. I wish I might make more than an annual connection with their zealous work." The yearly greetings from South America to the Convention make it evident that those far-away members realize with some vividness the great privilege and opportunity that T. S. membership gives. I felt that their appreciation and zeal would stimulate me, and might end frequent sluggishness on my part. My silent wishes are now, in a measure, fulfilled. In April of this year, the energetic Venezuela Branch started a quarterly magazine, *Dharma.* Three numbers have appeared. I believe I express the feeling and opinion of many members when I thank our South American brothers, most sincerely, for this courageous undertaking. We trust it will have the success it deserves. And we congratulate them upon the high excellence they have attained in the very first numbers.

The new Spanish quarterly averages forty-five pages. It is well printed. The cover has the familiar star and lotus symbols printed in black upon a greenish blue ground. The name *Dharma* in large black capitals is in the centre of the page. It is a quiet and modest cover with no suggestion of strange or startling contents.

The editors of *Dharma* have shown great intuition in selecting from the QUARTERLY, for reproduction in Spanish, articles that concern every member of the society whether in Venezuela, New York, Sweden or Germany. One of the first articles chosen for translation is Professor Mitchell's admirable treatise on "Theosophy and the T. S." I have found that article invaluable. So many inquiries come to me from new members, or from those not yet members, in regard to the divisions and animosities that separate societies called theosophical. I never feel it necessary to make a reply of my own. I refer the inquirer to Professor Mitchell's article. The question is usually answered satisfactorily some-

where in its pages. Doubts and questions similar to those that perplex students in North America may occur in Venezuela also. So I feel confident that the article will be helpful.

There is a second article of Professor Mitchell's—that on "Meditation." Meditation is a subject of first importance to all students of Theosophy. It has been written about for many centuries. Yet some people think it is more clearly and helpfully treated by Professor Mitchell than by the hundreds of others who have tried to describe the processes. This article has brought Theosophy to the attention of some people by showing a connection between Theosophy and Christianity! Interest has been thus aroused, and, after a time, the readers have asked for admission to the society. South America has a rich inheritance of meditations from the Saints of the Roman Catholic Church. Spanish Catholics are specially rich in the treasures of St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross. I venture to believe that Professor Mitchell's article in Spanish will do what it has done in its original form, namely, reconcile certain "old school" members with Christianity, and also induce some Christians to search for the precious pearl of the Wisdom Religion.

Writings by our great pioneers, Madam Blavatsky and Mr. Judge, are reprinted, and add to the classic character of the new publication. Two of Mr. Schofield's valuable lessons are translated, and an article by Mr. Johnston on the "Spiritual Origin of Life." The surprising article, "Saintliness and Business," also appears. That article alone is enough to make reflective people pause and consider. For it shows that the same characteristics which make a saint make, also, a successful business man.

Thus many articles which have proved helpful in the lives of English speaking members are now given to Spanish members in their mother tongue. Such a publication must be a great event in the history of the Venezuela Branch, and one over which the members may rightly rejoice. We, too, rejoice with those South American brothers, and share their gain. *Dharma* makes our common good, the QUARTERLY, more accessible to them; it makes them more accessible to us.

S. M.

Theosophisches Leben. The October Number of *Theosophisches Leben* translates five articles that have appeared in the QUARTERLY. German members, who do not read English, are thus kept *au courant* with the thought and interests of the entire Society. The articles chosen for translation are those that interpret some of the difficult meanings of the Christian Scriptures (Mr. Johnston's explanation of Adam and Eve, *e. g.*), or that throw light upon the mission of Christianity. The interesting address made by Mr. Paul Raatz at the last Convention of the T. S. is printed in full; the address is an account of the foundation and growth of the T. S. in Germany. There is another address, by Mr. Oskar Stoll, delivered to the Convention of the German Branches, at Munich; this address deals with the Mission of the T. S. Well-chosen extracts from the writings of Tauler, Suso, and others fill up the pages, and make the magazine interesting and helpful.

ALFRED WILLISTON.

Meditations on the Divine Liturgy, N. B. Gogol, Translated by L. Alexeieff. Published for the Anglican and Eastern Orthodox Churches Union. A. R. Mowbray. This book explains to Western Christians the elaborate ritual of the Eastern Church. It shows that while the ritual is a dramatic representation of our Lord's life, it serves also from beginning to end, as a circumference from which the mind may travel to the inner centre. In commenting upon the doctrine of the Real Presence, the author recognises that it is the Presence of the Master in history that has effected whatever good is to be found in any civilisation: "if society still hold together, if people do not breathe inveterate hatred to one

another, the secret cause is the Divine Liturgy reminding man of holy, heavenly love towards his brother."

The author recognises also, though not verbally, the relation of discipleship. For the disciple is he who "manifests the real presence" of his master. Gogol says of the priest: "If he have celebrated reverently, in fear, faith, and love, he is purified as the vessels of the Temple, remaining pure all the day. In the fulfilment of his varying pastoral duties—in the family, among others, among his parishioners, who are also his family, the Saviour himself is represented by him. And in all he does CHRIST will act by him, and in his words CHRIST will speak. Whether he lead those at enmity to make peace, urge the strong to be merciful to the weak, soften the hard-hearted, console the sorrowful, encourage the suffering to be patient—his words have the power of healing oil and will everywhere be words of peace and love." ALFRED WILLISTON.

The Reasonableness of the Religion of Jesus, The Baldwin Lectures for 1911 at the University of Michigan, by William S. Rainsford, D.D. Houghton, Mifflin, 1913. There is much in Dr. Rainsford's volume that is characteristic of present-day Liberal clergymen. Belief in the "unfairness of nature" and the consequent need of socialistic reforms; disbelief, partial or thorough-going, in the accuracy of the Gospel narratives, especially those portions which record miracles; and a misgiving as to the ability of the Church to use its opportunity in this day of general improvement—these doctrines are preached from "progressive" pulpits everywhere. They carry no conviction or solace to the soul that languishes for a physician. But, happily, Dr. Rainsford preaches another doctrine that is not commonly heard, and that encourages those who struggle in growing-pains of the soul. He has caught the meaning of the Sower and the Seed—of the Parables of the Kingdom. He sees that the essence of the Master's teaching is growth; therefore, with many apt illustrations, he speaks of religion as a living principle, germinating, springing up in man as a grain does in the field. The first two chapters set forth this view of religion so clearly that it would seem they might do much good, unless a superficial reading should interpret "growth" and "change" to mean external activities rather than repentance, conversion, and the transfer of consciousness from lower to higher planes of life.

THEODORE ASHTON.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION 164.—*Please give a clue to the interpretation of Saint Luke, Chapter xvi, the parable of the rich man and his steward.*

ANSWER.—The real difficulty lies, I suppose, in the strange injunction: "I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitation."

The passage is a difficult one, rendered more difficult by the reading adopted by the Revisors: "When it shall fail."

I have heard this explanation suggested: The parable was addressed to the disciples. The disciple is counseled to maintain an open-hearted charity towards all, men of the world as well as disciples, for all are really one with him. He should render all services, that may rightly be rendered, to men of the world, as well as to disciples. It may be his fate to stray from the path. Then some genuine service thus done to a man of the world may return to him, and may, under divine law, be the means of setting his feet once more on the path to the everlasting habitations. It is worth noting, that this parable of the unjust steward, follows immediately after the wonderful parable of the prodigal son, which, I suppose, in one of its aspects, is the story of a disciple who strayed from the path, and who, through terrible grief and humiliation, found his way back to the Master's love. No sentence is full of more loving wisdom than that: I will arise and go to my father.

C. J.

QUESTION 165.—*The teachings of Theosophy appeal to me; it all seems so reasonable; and yet in some way that I do not understand I hold back, my indefinite unwillingness proving greater than my desire that had seemed so definite. I simply cannot take the last step. Why is it?*

ANSWER.—For one reason, because the "last step" is probably millions of miles away from the spot where you now stand. Theosophy, as we so frequently need to remind our selves, is a life; it is to be lived, minute by minute, life after life, until at last we begin to understand something about the heart of it. Then only is it worth while to think about the last step. What appears to be giving the inquirer genuine trouble is the taking of one of the first steps; and sometimes they are the most difficult, especially for those of us who have had a thoroughly "modern" education, in which will, imagination and intellect are made to play at "Puss in the Corner" until it is almost impossible to get them back in their rightful places. Here is a bit of wisdom from George Macdonald that may give a clue to the inquirer's trouble: "In the history of the world the imagination has been quite as often right as the intellect, and the things in which it has been right have been of much the greater importance."

C. P.

ANSWER.—The inquirer may be admiring himself too much; may be seeing the reflection of himself in the window pane, instead of looking through it to the wonderful view without. "A man makes his own shadow," is an old saying; and it might well be added that only he can make it.

G. V. S. M.

ANSWER.—Faith, it would seem, is the first and the great essential. I know well the spot that the inquirer describes, every inch of the ground is familiar, for I spent years there. So long as I refused to believe I could not see. When I allowed my heart to be master, when I believed, lo! all became rational again, and stood the test of reason, which then took its rightful place as one of the instruments for my use. M. K.

ANSWER.—There are two mistakes that most of us make in our dealings with the spiritual world. We imagine that things there are very complicated, while they are most simple. We expect things to happen there instantaneously, without regard to the law of seedtime and harvest. It took us months to learn to walk in the physical world, but we expect to run in the spiritual world from the very day when we make up our minds that we would like to enter it. Somebody has said that the less material an art the more necessary it is to learn it by doing it. Certainly doing is most important in the "art" of real living; and I suspect that one who wishes to learn has to begin with doing. Applied to the case of the inquirer, that would mean that with an earnest desire to win to the real heart of the theosophic life, to which he cannot bring himself in one great decision, he would constantly require himself to make many small decisions. He might, for instance, say to himself that because he wanted to find the real light he would try to make life brighter for some person in his circle whom he did not like; would do his utmost, whenever he met that person to find what was really fine and true in him, and fasten his eyes on that; or he might set himself some everyday task that came in the line of his duty as a thing that was to be done, every day, with the utmost perfection of which he was capable. Think of the energy and determination in doing shown by many a poor boy whose heart is set on having a college education! If only we could set our hearts with equal simplicity and definiteness on the task of "working our way" into the Kingdom of Heaven. R. C.

QUESTION 166.—*How does Theosophy define Nirvana?*

ANSWER.—To begin with, how are we to decide how Theosophy defines anything? Who is authorized to speak for Theosophy? Who is authorized to speak even for Theosophists? Each has a right to his own view. None would venture to bind others by his definition.

Nirvana has many shades of meaning attached to it, but the more positive meaning which it has, for instance, in the Bhagavad Gita, or for the Northern Buddhists, certainly dōes not imply either annihilation or loss of identity; it is rather the finding of one's complete individuality. The tradition is, that Siddhartha the Compassionate still exists as an individual, though he entered Nirvana two and a half milleniums ago.

Is it not a universal experience that, at each awakening to a larger, deeper life, one says: "I feel myself to be much more *myself* than before." Is not spiritual progress a losing oneself, to find one's self? Is not just this everlasting truth taught in the words: "He that hateth his life shall keep it unto life eternal." Is there not every reason to believe that this is increasingly true along the line of spiritual progress, up to, and including, Nirvana?

But after all the only way to gain true insight is the way of experiment and experience. Follow the "noble eight-fold path" and see whether you do not thereby find yourself by losing yourself. C. J.

T·S·ACTIVITIES

A WORD FROM THE TREASURER.

Several members have recently asked me to explain through the columns of the QUARTERLY when the dues to the Theosophical Society are payable and to whom they should be paid. The editor fears that all his readers will not be interested in these facts; and I have had to promise to ask all those who already know them to skip to the next page.

First, the Society's year closes the last of April; it has been the custom to regard the day of the Annual Convention as the last day of that year. In 1913, the Convention came on April 26th, and the new year for the Society began on the 27th; on that day every member's dues for the year 1913-1914 were payable. Some of our Branches and some of our members have formed the pleasant habit of paying their dues in advance, so that when the Convention opens the Treasurer has often received many payments for the coming year. No one, however, is under obligation to make advance payments, but any members who have not yet paid their dues for the year 1913-1914 are requested to send them in at an early date. Or if this request come too close to the Christmas season to make it convenient for all to pay, a note saying that you have the matter in mind, and will remit a little later would be appreciated.

Second, there are several satisfactory ways in which payment may be made. In some Branches the Branch Treasurer collects the Society dues and sends them, in one remittance, to the Treasurer T. S. In some cases individual members send their remittance direct to the Treasurer T. S. Members who are ordering books or have some other business to transact with the Secretary's efficient office, have found it a convenience to send their dues to the Secretary T. S. who then forwards them to the Treasurer's office. This involves extra work for the Secretary which, I know, is most gladly done, but when letters contain no other business they might perhaps better be sent direct to the Treasurer, and by so much lighten the work of the Secretary.

Third, the Treasurer should be addressed at Box 1584, New York, N. Y. Several members have expressed the feeling that it would be safer to send money to a street address; and so I take this occasion to say that the foregoing address is both more permanent and secure.

I cannot close this notice without expressing my sincere thanks to the many members, whose names come to mind as I write, who have done so much, by prompt response and by generous contributions to the expenses of the Society, to make it possible to meet the necessary expenses of our rapidly increasing work.

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL.

New York, N. Y., December 1, 1913.

Two Branches have sent to the Editor their printed list of topics for the season of 1913-1914. As these lists may contain some suggestions for other Branches they are given here, with the omission of dates and other information that would be of interest only to local members.

SYLLABUS OF THE CINCINNATI BRANCH.

Opening Address.
The Future of Theosophy.
The Theosophical Society, Its Objects and Members.
The Changing Creed.
Is All Well with the World?
Seven Stages of Prayer.
Reincarnation.
Karma.
The Mystical Temple of King Solomon.
Man—Mortal and Immortal.
Brotherhood.
Am I My Brother's Keeper.
Cycles.
Progress.
Renunciation.
Self-Control.
What Is Infidelity?
George Fox.
Early Religions in America.
The One Religion.
Why God Does not Kill the Devil.
Lotus Night.

PROGRAM OF THE NEW YORK BRANCH.

I. Evolution and Reincarnation
II. The Laws of Karma. Social Service
III. The Two Natures in Man
IV. The Transfer of Consciousness
V. The Vision of Life
   (a) of Duty
   (b) of Love
      1. Life a Battle: Every Man a Soldier
      2. The Meaning of Suffering. Disease, Disgrace, etc.
      3. Religion. Obedience
      4. The Home. Self-surrender or Self-assertion
      5. Vocations, Business. Their real purpose
      6. Our Neighbor, Brotherhood
      7. Education. Discipline
VI. The Goal: Discipleship; Union

ACTIVITIES OF KARMA BRANCH, CHRISTIANIA, FOR THE YEAR 1912-1913.

The Branch meetings were, as usual, suspended in the Summer, as many members at the time leave Christiania for holidays or for other reasons. The regular Branch work began again in the middle of September, and meetings have been held every Thursday from 8.30 to 10 p. m., with two exceptions only.

Once or twice a month a public lecture has been given, the average attendance

being 27. The other meetings have been devoted to the study of the New Testament, especially the Gospel of St. John. The door has been kept open for outsiders. An earnest little circle of members and outsiders have regularly attended these meetings.

Though the general interest of outsiders in Theosophy does not seem to have increased in our part of the town, a devoted group of members have patiently carried on the work, knowing that the energy put into it is not wasted and that the Masters can direct and use this energy for their purpose.

The Annual Convention of the Branch was held on May 25th. It seemed evident that the attending members represented a centre of peace and joy. As Mr. T. H. Knoff, Chairman of the Branch Committee, did not wish to be re-elected as a member of the Committee, Mr. E. Bauthler was elected Chairman for the year to come. This refusal of Mr. Knoff's was due to the fact that he might be moving to another quarter of the town, or even outside it, and also to the feeling that it was wise that younger members should come to a share in the responsibility of the Branch work.

After the Convention the members spent a very happy evening, with their comrades of the Aurvanga Branch and some outsiders, at the house of the President of this Branch, Mr. Alme, who lives a little way outside Christiania.

T. H. KNOFF, *Chairman of the Annual Convention.*

Christiania, September 12, 1913.

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS.

ABRIDGMENT OF THE SECRET DOCTRINE, (Hillard)	$2.16
A PRIMER OF THEOSOPHY, by Katherine Hillard	.10
BHAGAVAD GITA, translated by Charles Johnston	1.00
BHAGAVAD GITA, Edited by W. Q. Judge, leather	.75
CABINET SIZE PHOTO, H. P. BLAVATSKY or W. Q. JUDGE	.50
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ESOTERIC BUDDHISM, by A. P. Sinnett, cloth	1.25
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FRAGMENTS, by Cavé	.60
IDYLL OF THE WHITE LOTUS, cloth	1.00
KARMA: WORKS AND WISDOM, by Charles Johnston	.35
KARMA, by A. P. Sinnett, a novel, cloth	.75
KEY TO THEOSOPHY, by H. P. Blavatsky	2.00
LETTERS THAT HAVE HELPED ME, by W. Q. Judge	
Vol. I, compiled by Jasper Niemand, cloth	.50
Vol. II, compiled by Thomas Green and Jasper Niemand, cloth	.60
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LIGHT ON THE PATH, cloth, 50c.; leather	.75
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SECRET DOCTRINE, by H. P. Blavatsky, Vols. I and II, and Index, cloth.	12.50
SERMON ON THE MOUNT, translated by Jas. M. Pryse, paper, 35c.; cloth	.60
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THE APOCALYPSE UNSEALED, by James M. Pryse	2.00
THE CREED OF BUDDHA	1.50
THE CREED OF CHRIST	1.25
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THE SPIRITUAL LIFE, by Archibald Keightley	.10
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY AND THEOSOPHY, by H. B. Mitchell	.20
THE THEOSOPHY OF THE UPANISHADS, by Charles Johnston	1.25
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UNITY OF RELIGIONS, by J. W. Keightley	.10
VOICE OF THE SILENCE, by H. P. Blavatsky, cloth, 50c.; leather	.75
VOW OF POVERTY AND OTHER ESSAYS, by Jasper Niemand, paper.	.15

These and any other books on Theosophical, Religious and Philosophical subjects, can be obtained from

THE SECRETARY T. S.,

159 Warren Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

The Theosophical Society

Founded by H. P. Blavatsky at New York in 1875

THE Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creed, dogma, nor personal authority to enforce or impose; neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they desire for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society, held at Boston, April, 1895:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane, and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics*.

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *path* to tread in this."

Applications for membership should be addressed to the Secretary T. S., 159 Warren Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

BROOKLYN EAGLE PRESS